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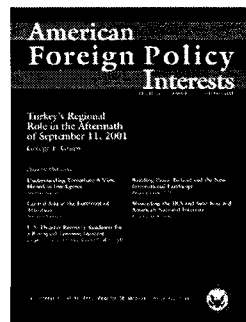
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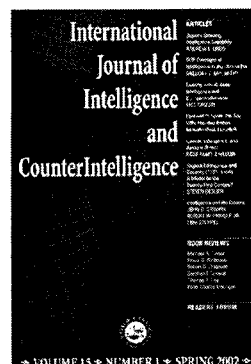
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The Unipolar Moment Revisited

—Charles Krauthammer—

It has been assumed that the old bipolar world would beget a multipolar world with power dispersed to new centers in Japan, Germany (and/or "Europe"), China and a diminished Soviet Union/Russia. [This is] mistaken. The immediate post-Cold War world is not multipolar. It is unipolar. The center of world power is an unchallenged superpower, the United States, attended by its Western allies.

"The Unipolar Moment", 1990¹

IN LATE 1990, shortly before the collapse of the Soviet Union, it was clear that the world we had known for half a century was disappearing. The question was what would succeed it. I suggested then that we had already entered the "unipolar moment." The gap in power between the leading nation and all the others was so unprecedented as to yield an international structure unique to modern history: unipolarity.

At the time, this thesis was generally seen as either wild optimism or simple American arrogance. The conventional wisdom was that with the demise of the Soviet empire the bipolarity of the second half of the 20th century would yield to

multipolarity. The declinist school, led by Paul Kennedy, held that America, suffering from "imperial overstretch", was already in relative decline. The Asian enthusiasm, popularized by (among others) James Fallows, saw the second coming of the Rising Sun. The conventional wisdom was best captured by Senator Paul Tsongas: "The Cold War is over; Japan won."

They were wrong, and no one has put it more forcefully than Paul Kennedy himself in a classic recantation published earlier this year. "Nothing has ever existed like this disparity of power; nothing", he said of America's position today. "Charlemagne's empire was merely western European in its reach. The Roman empire stretched farther afield, but there was another great empire in Persia, and a larger one in China. There is, therefore, no comparison."² Not everyone is convinced. Samuel Huntington argued in 1999 that we had entered not a unipolar world but

¹Editor's note: This quotation, and all subsequent boxed quotations in this essay, are from Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment", *Foreign Affairs: America and the World* (1990/91), which introduced the idea of American unipolarity. That essay was adapted from the first annual Henry M. Jackson Memorial Lecture, September 18, 1990.

²Kennedy, "The Eagle has Landed", *Financial Times*, February 2, 2002.

Charles Krauthammer, winner of the Pulitzer Prize for commentary, is a syndicated columnist for the *Washington Post* and an essayist for *Time*.

a “uni-multipolar world.”³ Tony Judt writes mockingly of the “loud boasts of unipolarity and hegemony” heard in Washington today.⁴ But as Stephen Brooks and William Wohlforth argue in a recent review of the subject, those denying unipolarity can do so only by applying a ridiculous standard: that America be able to achieve all its goals everywhere all by itself. This is a standard not for unipolarity but for divinity. Among mortals, and in the context of the last half millennium of history, the current structure of the international system is clear: “If today’s American primacy does not constitute unipolarity, then nothing ever will.”⁵

A second feature of this new post-Cold War world, I ventured, would be a resurgent American isolationism. I was wrong. It turns out that the new norm for America is not post-World War I withdrawal but post-World War II engagement. In the 1990s, Pat Buchanan gave 1930s isolationism a run. He ended up carrying Palm Beach.

Finally, I suggested that a third feature of this new unipolar world would be an increase rather than a decrease in the threat of war, and that it would come from a new source: weapons of mass destruction wielded by rogue states. This would constitute a revolution in international relations, given that in the past it was great powers who presented the principal threats to world peace.

Where are we twelve years later? The two defining features of the new post-Cold War world remain: unipolarity and rogue states with weapons of mass destruction. Indeed, these characteristics have grown even more pronounced. Contrary to expectation, the United States has not regressed to the mean; rather, its dominance has dramatically increased. And during our holiday from history in the 1990s, the rogue state/WMD problem grew more acute. Indeed, we are now on

the eve of history’s first war over weapons of mass destruction.

The true geopolitical structure of the post-Cold War world . . . [is] a single pole of world power that consists of the United States at the apex of the industrial West. Perhaps it is more accurate to say the United States and behind it the West.

“The Unipolar Moment”, 1990

Unipolarity After September 11, 2001

THERE IS LITTLE need to rehearse the acceleration of unipolarity in the 1990s. Japan, whose claim to power rested exclusively on economics, went into economic decline. Germany stagnated. The Soviet Union ceased to exist, contracting into a smaller, radically weakened Russia. The European Union turned inward toward the great project of integration and built a strong social infrastructure at the expense of military capacity. Only China grew in strength, but coming from so far behind it will be decades before it can challenge American primacy—and that assumes that its current growth continues unabated.

The result is the dominance of a single power unlike anything ever seen. Even at its height Britain could always be seriously challenged by the next greatest powers. Britain had a smaller army than the land powers of Europe and its navy was equaled

³Huntington, “The Lonely Superpower”, *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 1999). By uni-multipolar Huntington means a system with a pre-eminent state whose sole participation is insufficient for the resolution of international issues. The superpower can still serve as a veto player, but requires other powers to achieve its ends.

⁴Judt, “Its Own Worst Enemy”, *New York Review of Books*, August 15, 2002.

⁵Brooks and Wohlforth, “American Primacy in Perspective”, *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2002).

by the next two navies combined. Today, American military spending exceeds that of the next *twenty* countries combined. Its navy, air force and space power are unrivaled. Its technology is irresistible. It is dominant by every measure: military, economic, technological, diplomatic, cultural, even linguistic, with a myriad of countries trying to fend off the inexorable march of Internet-fueled MTV English.

American dominance has not gone unnoticed. During the 1990s, it was mainly China and Russia that denounced unipolarity in their occasional joint communiqués. As the new century dawned it was on everyone's lips. A French foreign minister dubbed the United States not a superpower but a hyperpower. The dominant concern of foreign policy establishments everywhere became understanding and living with the 800-pound American gorilla.

And then September 11 *heightened* the asymmetry. It did so in three ways. First, and most obviously, it led to a demonstration of heretofore latent American military power. Kosovo, the first war ever fought and won exclusively from the air, had given a hint of America's quantum leap in military power (and the enormous gap that had developed between American and European military capabilities). But it took September 11 for the United States to unleash with concentrated fury a fuller display of its power in Afghanistan. Being a relatively pacific, commercial republic, the United States does not go around looking for demonstration wars. This one was thrust upon it. In response, America showed that at a range of 7,000 miles and with but a handful of losses, it could destroy within weeks a hardened, fanatical regime favored by geography and climate in the "graveyard of empires."

Such power might have been demonstrated earlier, but it was not. "I talked with the previous U.S. administration", said Vladimir Putin shortly after September 11,

and pointed out the bin Laden issue to them. They wrung their hands so helplessly and said, 'the Taliban are not turning him over, what can one do?' I remember I was surprised: If they are not turning him over, one has to think and do something.⁶

Nothing was done. President Clinton and others in his administration have protested that nothing could have been done, that even the 1998 African embassy bombings were not enough to mobilize the American people to strike back seriously against terrorism. The new Bush Administration, too, did not give the prospect of mass-casualty terrorism (and the recommendations of the Hart-Rudman Commission) the priority it deserved. Without September 11, the giant would surely have slept longer. The world would have been aware of America's size and potential, but not its ferocity or its full capacities. (Paul Kennedy's homage to American power, for example, was offered in the wake of the Afghan campaign.)

Second, September 11 demonstrated a new form of American strength. The center of its economy was struck, its aviation shut down, Congress brought to a halt, the government sent underground, the country paralyzed and fearful. Yet within days the markets reopened, the economy began its recovery, the president mobilized the nation, and a united Congress immediately underwrote a huge new worldwide campaign against terror. The Pentagon started planning the U.S. military response even as its demolished western façade still smoldered.

America had long been perceived as invulnerable. That illusion was shattered on September 11, 2001. But with a demonstration of its recuperative powers—

⁶Interview with the German newspaper *Bild*, translated and reported in the *Interfax News Bulletin*, September 21, 2001.

an economy and political system so deeply rooted and fundamentally sound that it could spring back to life within days—that sense of invulnerability assumed a new character. It was transmuted from impermeability to resilience, the product of unrivaled human, technological and political reserves.

The third effect of September 11 was to accelerate the realignment of the current great powers, such as they are, behind the United States. In 1990, America's principal ally was NATO. A decade later, its alliance base had grown to include former members of the Warsaw Pact. Some of the major powers, however, remained uncommitted. Russia and China flirted with the idea of an "anti-hegemonic alliance." Russian leaders made ostentatious visits to pieces of the old Soviet empire such as Cuba and North Korea. India and Pakistan, frozen out by the United States because of their nuclear testing, remained focused mainly on one another. But after September 11, the bystanders came calling. Pakistan made an immediate strategic decision to join the American camp. India enlisted with equal alacrity, offering the United States basing, overflight rights and a level of cooperation unheard of during its half century of Nehruist genuflection to anti-American non-alignment. Russia's Putin, seeing both a coincidence of interests in the fight against Islamic radicalism and an opportunity to gain acceptance in the Western camp, dramatically realigned Russian foreign policy toward the United States. (Russia has already been rewarded with a larger role in NATO and tacit American recognition of Russia's interests in its "near abroad.") China remains more distant but, also having a coincidence of interests with the United States in fighting Islamic radicalism, it has cooperated with the war on terror and muted its competition with America in the Pacific.

The realignment of the fence-sitters

simply accentuates the historical anomaly of American unipolarity. Our experience with hegemony historically is that it inevitably creates a counterbalancing coalition of weaker powers, most recently against Napoleonic France and Germany (twice) in the 20th century. Nature abhors a vacuum; history abhors hegemony. Yet during the first decade of American unipolarity no such counterbalancing occurred. On the contrary, the great powers lined up behind the United States, all the more so after September 11.

The most crucial new element in the post-Cold War world [is] the emergence of a new strategic environment marked by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. . . . The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery will constitute the greatest single threat to world security for the rest of our lives. That is what makes a new international order not an imperial dream or a Wilsonian fantasy but a matter of the sheerest prudence. It is slowly dawning on the West that there is a need to establish some new regime to police these weapons and those who brandish them. . . . Iraq . . . is the prototype of this new strategic threat.

"The Unipolar Moment", 1990

THE AMERICAN hegemon has no great power enemies, an historical oddity of the first order. Yet it does face a serious threat to its dominance, indeed to its essential security. It comes from a source even more historically odd: an archipelago of rogue states (some connected with transnational terrorists) wielding weapons of mass destruction.

The threat is not trivial. It is the single greatest danger to the United States because, for all of America's dominance, and for all of its recently demonstrated resilience, there is one thing it might not survive: decapitation. The detonation of a

dozen nuclear weapons in major American cities, or the spreading of smallpox or anthrax throughout the general population, is an existential threat. It is perhaps the only realistic threat to America as a functioning hegemon, perhaps even to America as a functioning modern society.

It is of course banal to say that modern technology has shrunk the world. But the obvious corollary, that in a shrunken world the divide between regional superpowers and great powers is radically narrowed, is rarely drawn. Missiles shrink distance. Nuclear (or chemical or biological) devices multiply power. Both can be bought at market. Consequently the geopolitical map is irrevocably altered. Fifty years ago, Germany—centrally located, highly industrial and heavily populated—could pose a threat to world security and to the other great powers. It was inconceivable that a relatively small Middle Eastern state with an almost entirely imported industrial base could do anything more than threaten its neighbors. The central truth of the coming era is that this is no longer the case: relatively small, peripheral and backward states will be able to emerge rapidly as threats not only to regional, but to world, security.

"The Unipolar Moment", 1990

Like unipolarity, this is historically unique. WMD are not new, nor are rogue states. Their conjunction is. We have had fifty years of experience with nuclear weapons—but in the context of bipolarity, which gave the system a predictable, if perilous, stability. We have just now entered an era in which the capacity for inflicting mass death, and thus posing a threat both to world peace and to the dominant power, resides in small, peripheral states.

What does this conjunction of unique circumstances—unipolarity and the proliferation of terrible weapons—mean for American foreign policy? That the first and most urgent task is

protection from these weapons. The catalyst for this realization was again September 11. Throughout the 1990s, it had been assumed that WMD posed no emergency because traditional concepts of deterrence would hold. September 11 revealed the possibility of future WMD-armed enemies both undeterrable and potentially undetectable. The 9/11 suicide bombers were undeterrable; the author of the subsequent anthrax attacks has proven undetectable. The possible alliance of rogue states with such undeterrables and undetectables—and the possible transfer to them of weapons of mass destruction—presents a new strategic situation that demands a new strategic doctrine.

Any solution will have to include three elements: denying, disarming, and defending. First, we will have to develop a new regime, similar to COCOM (Coordinating Committee on Export Controls) to deny yet more high technology to such states. Second, those states that acquire such weapons anyway will have to submit to strict outside control or risk being physically disarmed. A final element must be the development of antiballistic missile and air defense systems to defend against those weapons that do escape Western control or preemption. . . . There is no alternative to confronting, deterring and, if necessary, disarming states that brandish and use weapons of mass destruction. And there is no one to do that but the United States, backed by as many allies as will join the endeavor.

"The Unipolar Moment", 1990

The Crisis of Unipolarity

ACCORDINGLY, not one but a host of new doctrines have come tumbling out since September 11. First came the with-us-or-against-us ultimatum to any state aid-

ing, abetting or harboring terrorists. Then, pre-emptive attack on any enemy state developing weapons of mass destruction. And now, regime change in any such state.

The boldness of these policies—or, as much of the world contends, their arrogance—is breathtaking. The American anti-terrorism ultimatum, it is said, is high-handed and permits the arbitrary application of American power everywhere. Pre-emption is said to violate traditional doctrines of just war. And regime change, as Henry Kissinger has argued, threatens 350 years of post-Westphalian international practice. Taken together, they amount to an unprecedented assertion of American freedom of action and a definitive statement of a new American unilateralism.

To be sure, these are not the first instances of American unilateralism. Before September 11, the Bush Administration had acted unilaterally, but on more minor matters, such as the Kyoto Protocol and the Biological Weapons Convention, and with less bluntness, as in its protracted negotiations with Russia over the ABM treaty. The “axis of evil” speech of January 29, however, took unilateralism to a new level. Latent resentments about American willfulness are latent no more. American dominance, which had been tolerated if not welcomed, is now producing such irritation and hostility in once friendly quarters, such as Europe, that some suggest we have arrived at the end of the opposition-free grace period that America had enjoyed during the unipolar moment.⁷

In short, post-9/11 U.S. unilateralism has produced the first crisis of unipolarity. It revolves around the central question of the unipolar age: Who will define the hegemon’s ends?

The issue is not one of style but of purpose. Secretary of Defense Donald

Rumsfeld gave the classic formulation of unilateralism when he said (regarding the Afghan war and the war on terrorism, but the principle is universal), “the mission determines the coalition.” We take our friends where we find them, but only in order to help us in accomplishing the mission. The mission comes first, and we decide it.

Contrast this with the classic case study of multilateralism at work: the U.S. decision in February 1991 to conclude the Gulf War. As the Iraqi army was fleeing, the first Bush Administration had to decide its final goal: the liberation of Kuwait or regime change in Iraq. It stopped at Kuwait. Why? Because, as Brent Scowcroft has explained, going further would have fractured the coalition, gone against our promises to allies and violated the UN resolutions under which we were acting. “Had we added occupation of Iraq and removal of Saddam Hussein to those objectives”, wrote Scowcroft in the *Washington Post* on October 16, 2001, “. . . our Arab allies, refusing to countenance an invasion of an Arab colleague, would have deserted us.” The coalition defined the mission.

Who should define American ends today? This is a question of agency but it leads directly to a fundamental question of policy. If the coalition—whether NATO, the wider Western alliance, *ad hoc* outfits such as the Gulf War alliance, the UN, or the “international community”—defines America’s mission, we have one vision of America’s role in the world. If, on the other hand, the mission defines the coalition, we have an entirely different vision.

⁷A Sky News poll finds that even the British public considers George W. Bush a greater threat to world peace than Saddam Hussein. The poll was conducted September 2–6, 2002.

A large segment of American opinion doubts the legitimacy of unilateral American action but accepts quite readily actions undertaken by the "world community" acting in concert. Why it should matter to Americans that their actions get a Security Council nod from, say, Deng Xiaoping and the butchers of Tiananmen Square is beyond me. But to many Americans it matters. It is largely for domestic reasons, therefore, that American political leaders make sure to dress unilateral action in multilateral clothing. The danger, of course, is that they might come to believe their own pretense.

"The Unipolar Moment", 1990

Liberal Internationalism

FOR MANY Americans, multilateralism is no pretense. On the contrary: It has become the very core of the liberal internationalist school of American foreign policy. In the October 2002 debate authorizing the use of force in Iraq, the Democratic chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Carl Levin, proposed authorizing the president to act only with prior approval from the UN Security Council. Senator Edward Kennedy put it succinctly while addressing the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies on September 27: "I'm waiting for the final recommendation of the Security Council before I'm going to say how I'm going to vote."

This logic is deeply puzzling. How exactly does the Security Council confer moral authority on American action? The Security Council is a committee of great powers, heirs to the victors in the Second World War. They manage the world in their own interest. The Security Council is, on the very rare occasions when it actually works, realpolitik by committee. But by what logic is it a repository of international morality? How does the approval of France and Russia, acting clearly and

rationally in pursuit of their own interests in Iraq (largely oil and investment), confer legitimacy on an invasion?

That question was beyond me twelve years ago. It remains beyond me now. Yet this kind of logic utterly dominated the intervening Clinton years. The 1990s were marked by an obsession with "international legality" as expressed by this or that Security Council resolution. To take one long forgotten example: After an Iraqi provocation in February 1998, President Clinton gave a speech at the Pentagon laying the foundation for an attack on Iraq (one of many that never came). He cited as justification for the use of force the need to enforce Iraqi promises made under post-Gulf War ceasefire conditions that "the United Nations demanded—not the United States—the United Nations." Note the formulation. Here is the president of the most powerful nation on earth stopping in mid-sentence to stress the primacy of commitments made to the UN over those made to the United States.

This was not surprising from a president whose first inaugural address pledged American action when "the will and conscience of the international community is defied." Early in the Clinton years, Madeleine Albright formulated the vision of the liberal internationalist school then in power as "assertive multilateralism." Its principal diplomatic activity was the pursuit of a dizzying array of universal treaties on chemical weapons, biological weapons, nuclear testing, global environment, land mines and the like. Its trademark was consultation: Clinton was famous for sending Secretary of State Warren Christopher on long trips (for example, through Europe on Balkan policy) or endless shuttles (uncountable pilgrimages to Damascus) to consult; he invariably returned home empty-handed and diminished. And its principal objective was good international citizenship: It was argued on myriad foreign policy issues that we could not do X

because it would leave us “isolated.” Thus in 1997 the Senate passed a chemical weapons convention that even some of its proponents admitted was unenforceable, largely because of the argument that everyone else had signed it and that failure to ratify would leave us isolated. Isolation, in and of itself, was seen as a diminished and even morally suspect condition.

A lesson in isolation occurred during the 1997 negotiations in Oslo over the land mine treaty. One of the rare hold-outs, interestingly enough, was Finland. Finding himself scolded by his neighbors for opposing the land mine ban, the Finnish prime minister noted tartly that this was a “very convenient” pose for the “other Nordic countries” who “want Finland to be their land mine.”

In many parts of the world, a thin line of American GIs is the land mine. The main reason we oppose the land mine treaty is that we need them in the DMZ in Korea. We man the lines there. Sweden and France and Canada do not have to worry about a North Korean invasion killing thousands of their soldiers. As the unipolar power and thus guarantor of peace in places where Swedes do not tread, we need weapons that others do not. Being uniquely situated in the world, we cannot afford the empty platitudes of allies not quite candid enough to admit that they live under the umbrella of American power. That often leaves us “isolated.”

Multilateralism is the liberal internationalist’s means of saving us from this shameful condition. But the point of the multilateralist imperative is not merely psychological. It has a clear and coherent geopolitical objective. It is a means that defines the ends. Its means—internationalism (the moral, legal and strategic primacy of international institutions over national interests) and legalism (the belief that the sinews of stability are laws, treaties and binding international contracts)—are in service to a larger vision: remaking the

international system in the image of domestic civil society. The multilateralist imperative seeks to establish an international order based not on sovereignty and power but on interdependence—a new order that, as Secretary of State Cordell Hull said upon returning from the Moscow Conference of 1943, abolishes the “need for spheres of influence, for alliances, for balance of power.”

Liberal internationalism seeks through multilateralism to transcend power politics, narrow national interest and, ultimately, the nation-state itself. The nation-state is seen as some kind of archaic residue of an anarchic past, an affront to the vision of a domesticated international arena. This is why liberal thinkers embrace the erosion of sovereignty promised by the new information technologies and the easy movement of capital across borders. They welcome the decline of sovereignty as the road to the new globalism of a norm-driven, legally-bound international system broken to the mold of domestic society.⁸

The greatest sovereign, of course, is the American superpower, which is why liberal internationalists feel such acute discomfort with American dominance. To achieve their vision, America too—America especially—must be domesticated. Their project is thus to restrain America by building an entangling web of interdependence, tying down Gulliver with myriad strings that diminish his overweening power. Who, after all, was the ABM treaty or a land mine treaty going to restrain? North Korea?

This liberal internationalist vision—the multilateral handcuffing of American power—is, as Robert Kagan has pointed out, the dominant view in Europe.⁹ That is

⁸See my “A World Imagined”, *The New Republic*, March 15, 1999, from which some of the foregoing discussion is drawn.

⁹Kagan, “Power and Weakness”, *Policy Review* (June 2002).

to be expected, given Europe's weakness and America's power. But it is a mistake to see this as only a European view. The idea of a new international community with self-governing institutions and self-enforcing norms—the vision that requires the domestication of American power—is the view of the Democratic Party in the United States and of a large part of the American foreign policy establishment. They spent the last decade in power fashioning precisely those multilateral ties to restrain the American Gulliver and remake him into a tame international citizen.¹⁰ The multilateralist project is to use—indeed, to use up—current American dominance to create a new international system in which new norms of legalism and interdependence rule in America's place—in short, a system that is no longer unipolar.

There is much pious talk about a new multilateral world and the promise of the United Nations as guarantor of a new post-Cold War order. But this is to mistake cause and effect, the United States and the United Nations. The United Nations is guarantor of nothing. Except in a formal sense, it can hardly be said to exist. Collective security? In the Gulf, without the United States leading and prodding, bribing and blackmailing, no one would have stirred. . . . The world would have written off Kuwait the way the last body pledged to collective security, the League of Nations, wrote off Abyssinia.

"The Unipolar Moment", 1990

Realism and the New Unilateralism

THE BASIC division between the two major foreign policy schools in America centers on the question of what is, and what should be, the fundamental basis of international relations: paper or power. Liberal internationalism envisions a world order that, like domestic society, is governed by laws and not men. Realists see this vision as hope-

lessly utopian. The history of paper treaties—from the prewar Kellogg-Briand Pact and Munich to the post-Cold War Oslo accords and the 1994 Agreed Framework with North Korea—is a history of naiveté and cynicism, a combination both toxic and volatile that invariably ends badly. Trade agreements with Canada are one thing. Pieces of parchment to which existential enemies affix a signature are quite another. They are worse than worthless because they give a false sense of security and breed complacency. For the realist, the ultimate determinant of the most basic elements of international life—security, stability and peace—is power.

Which is why a realist would hardly forfeit the current unipolarity for the vain promise of goo-goo one-worldism. Nor, however, should a realist want to forfeit unipolarity for the familiarity of traditional multipolarity. Multipolarity is inherently fluid and unpredictable. Europe practiced multipolarity for centuries and found it so unstable and bloody, culminating in 1914 in the catastrophic collapse of delicately balanced alliance systems, that Europe sought its permanent abolition in political and economic union. Having abjured multipolarity for the region, it is odd in the extreme to then prefer multipolarity for the world.

Less can be said about the destiny of

¹⁰In "A World Imagined", I noted the oddity of an American governing elite adopting a goal—a constrained America—that is more logically the goal of foreigners: "The ultimate irony is that this is traditionally the vision of small nations. They wish to level the playing field with the big boys. For them, treaties, international institutions, and interdependence are the great equalizers. Leveling is fine for them. But for us? The greatest power in the world—the most dominant power relative to its rivals that the world has seen since the Roman empire—is led by people who seek to diminish that dominance and level the international arena."

unipolarity. It is too new. Yet we do have the history of the last decade, our only modern experience with unipolarity, and it was a decade of unusual stability among all major powers. It would be foolish to project from just a ten-year experience, but that experience does call into question the basis for the claims that unipolarity is intrinsically unstable or impossible to sustain in a mass democracy.

I would argue that unipolarity, managed benignly, is far more likely to keep the peace. Benignity is, of course, in the eye of the beholder. But the American claim to benignity is not mere self-congratulation. We have a track record. Consider one of history's rare controlled experiments. In the 1940s, lines were drawn through three peoples—Germans, Koreans and Chinese—one side closely bound to the United States, the other to its adversary. It turned into a controlled experiment because both states in the divided lands shared a common culture. Fifty years later the results are in. Does anyone doubt the superiority, both moral and material, of West Germany vs. East Germany, South Korea vs. North Korea and Taiwan vs. China?¹¹

Benignity is also manifest in the way others welcome our power. It is the reason, for example, that the Pacific Rim countries are loath to see our military presence diminished: They know that the United States is not an imperial power with a desire to rule other countries—which is why they so readily accept it as a balancer. It is the reason, too, why Europe, so seized with complaints about American high-handedness, nonetheless reacts with alarm to the occasional suggestion that America might withdraw its military presence. America came, but it did not come to rule. Unlike other hegemons and would-be hegemons, it does not entertain a grand vision of a new world. No Thousand Year Reich. No New Soviet Man. It has no great desire to

remake human nature, to conquer for the extraction of natural resources, or to rule for the simple pleasure of dominion. Indeed, America is the first hegemonic power in history to be obsessed with “exit strategies.” It could not wait to get out of Haiti and Somalia; it would get out of Kosovo and Bosnia today if it could. Its principal aim is to maintain the stability and relative tranquility of the current international system by enforcing, maintaining and extending the current peace.

The form of realism that I am arguing for—call it the new unilateralism—is clear in its determination to self-consciously and confidently deploy American power in pursuit of those global ends. Note: global ends. There is a form of unilateralism that is devoted only to narrow American self-interest and it has a name, too: It is called isolationism. Critics of the new unilateralism often confuse it with isolationism because both are prepared to unashamedly exercise American power. But isolationists *oppose* America acting as a unipolar power not because they disagree with the unilateral means, but because they deem the ends

¹¹This is not to claim, by any means, a perfect record of benignity. America has often made and continues to make alliances with unpleasant authoritarian regimes. As I argued recently in *Time* (“Dictatorships and Double Standards”, September 23, 2002), such alliances are nonetheless justified so long as they are instrumental (meant to defeat the larger evil) and temporary (expire with the emergency). When Hitler was defeated, we stopped coddling Stalin. Forty years later, as the Soviet threat receded, the United States was instrumental in easing Pinochet out of power and overthrowing Marcos. We withdrew our support for these dictators once the two conditions that justified such alliances had disappeared: The global threat of Soviet communism had receded, and truly democratic domestic alternatives to these dictators had emerged.

far too broad. Isolationists would abandon the larger world and use American power exclusively for the narrowest of American interests: manning Fortress America by defending the American homeland and putting up barriers to trade and immigration.

The new unilateralism defines American interests far beyond narrow self-defense. In particular, it identifies two other major interests, both global: extending the peace by advancing democracy and preserving the peace by acting as balancer of last resort. Britain was the balancer in Europe, joining the weaker coalition against the stronger to create equilibrium. America's unique global power allows it to be the balancer in every region. We balanced Iraq by supporting its weaker neighbors in the Gulf War. We balance China by supporting the ring of smaller states at its periphery (from South Korea to Taiwan, even to Vietnam). Our role in the Balkans was essentially to create a microbalance: to support the weaker Bosnian Muslims against their more dominant neighbors, and subsequently to support the weaker Albanian Kosovars against the Serbs.

Of course, both of these tasks often advance American national interests as well. The promotion of democracy multiplies the number of nations likely to be friendly to the United States, and regional equilibria produce stability that benefits a commercial republic like the United States. America's (intended) exertions on behalf of pre-emptive non-proliferation, too, are clearly in the interest of both the United States and the international system as a whole.

Critics find this paradoxical: acting unilaterally but for global ends. Why paradoxical? One can hardly argue that depriving Saddam (and potentially, terrorists) of WMD is not a global end. Unilateralism may be required to pursue this end. We may be left isolated in so doing, but we

would be acting nevertheless in the name of global interests—larger than narrow American self-interest and larger, too, than the narrowly perceived self-interest of smaller, weaker powers (even great powers) that dare not confront the rising danger.

What is the essence of that larger interest? Most broadly defined, it is maintaining a stable, open and functioning unipolar system. Liberal internationalists disdain that goal as too selfish, as it makes paramount the preservation of both American power and independence. Isolationists reject the goal as too selfless, for defining American interests too globally and thus too generously.

A THIRD critique comes from what might be called pragmatic realists, who see the new unilateralism I have outlined as hubristic, and whose objections are practical. They are prepared to engage in a pragmatic multilateralism. They value great power concert. They seek Security Council support not because it confers any moral authority, but because it spreads risk. In their view, a single hegemon risks far more violent resentment than would a power that consistently acts as *primus inter pares*, sharing rule-making functions with others.¹²

I have my doubts. The United States made an extraordinary effort in the Gulf War to get UN support, share decision-making, assemble a coalition and, as we have seen, deny itself the fruits of victory in order to honor coalition goals. Did that diminish the anti-American feeling in the region? Did it garner support for subsequent Iraq policy dictated by the original acquiescence to the coalition?

The attacks of September 11 were

¹²This basic view is well-represented in *The National Interest's* Fall 2002 symposium, "September 11th One Year On: Power, Purpose and Strategy in U.S. Foreign Policy."

planned during the Clinton Administration, an administration that made a fetish of consultation and did its utmost to subordinate American hegemony and smother unipolarity. The resentments were hardly assuaged. Why? Because the extremist rage against the United States is engendered by the very structure of the international system, not by the details of our management of it.

Pragmatic realists also value international support in the interest of sharing burdens, on the theory that sharing decision-making enlists others in our own hegemonic enterprise and makes things less costly. If you are too vigorous in asserting yourself in the short-term, they argue, you are likely to injure yourself in the long-term when you encounter problems that require the full cooperation of other partners, such as counter-terrorism. As Brooks and Wohlforth put it, "Straining relationships now will lead only to a more challenging policy environment later on."¹³

If the concern about the new unilateralism is that American assertiveness be judiciously rationed, and that one needs to think long-term, it is hard to disagree. One does not go it alone or dictate terms on every issue. On some issues such as membership in and support of the WTO, where the long-term benefit both to the American national interest and global interests is demonstrable, one willingly constricts sovereignty. Trade agreements are easy calls, however, free trade being perhaps the only mathematically provable political good. Others require great skepticism. The Kyoto Protocol, for example, would have harmed the American economy while doing nothing for the global environment. (Increased emissions from China, India and Third World countries exempt from its provisions would have more than made up for American cuts.) Kyoto failed on its merits, but was nonetheless pushed because the rest of the

world supported it. The same case was made for the chemical and biological weapons treaties—sure, they are useless or worse, but why not give in there in order to build good will for future needs? But appeasing multilateralism does not assuage it; appeasement merely legitimizes it. Repeated acquiescence to provisions that America deems injurious reinforces the notion that legitimacy derives from international consensus, thus undermining America's future freedom of action—and thus contradicting the pragmatic realists' own goals.

America must be guided by its independent judgment, both about its own interest and about the global interest. Especially on matters of national security, war-making and the deployment of power, America should neither defer nor contract out decision-making, particularly when the concessions involve permanent structural constrictions such as those imposed by an International Criminal Court. Prudence, yes. No need to act the superpower in East Timor or Bosnia. But there is a need to do so in Afghanistan and in Iraq. No need to act the superpower on steel tariffs. But there is a need to do so on missile defense.

The prudent exercise of power allows, indeed calls for, occasional concessions on non-vital issues if only to maintain psychological good will. Arrogance and gratuitous high-handedness are counterproductive. But we should not delude ourselves as to what psychological good will buys. Countries will cooperate with us, first, out of their own self-interest and, second, out of the need and desire to cultivate good relations with the world's superpower. Warm and fuzzy feelings are a distant third. Take counterterrorism. After the attack on the U.S.S. *Cole*, Yemen did everything it could to stymie the American investigation. It lifted not a finger to sup-

¹³Brooks and Wohlforth, "American Primacy in Perspective."

press terrorism. This was under an American administration that was obsessively accommodating and multilateralist. Today, under the most unilateralist of administrations, Yemen has decided to assist in the war on terrorism. This was not a result of a sudden attack of good will toward America. It was a result of the war in Afghanistan, which concentrated the mind of heretofore recalcitrant states like Yemen on the costs of non-cooperation with the United States.¹⁴ Coalitions are not made by superpowers going begging hat in hand. They are made by asserting a position and inviting others to join. What “pragmatic” realists often fail to realize is that unilateralism is the high road to multilateralism. When George Bush senior said of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, “this will not stand”, and made it clear that he was prepared to act alone if necessary, that declaration—and the credibility of American determination to act unilaterally—in and of itself created a coalition. Hafez al-Asad did not join out of feelings of good will. He joined because no one wants to be left at the dock when the hegemon is sailing.

Unilateralism does not mean *seeking* to act alone. One acts in concert with others if possible. Unilateralism simply means that one does not allow oneself to be hostage to others. No unilateralist would, say, reject Security Council support for an attack on Iraq. The nontrivial question that separates unilateralism from multilateralism—and that tests the “pragmatic realists”—is this: What do you do if, at the end of the day, the Security Council refuses to back you? Do you allow yourself to be dictated to on issues of vital national—and international—security?

WHEN I FIRST proposed the unipolar model in 1990, I suggested that we should accept both its burdens and oppor-

tunities and that, if America did not wreck its economy, unipolarity could last thirty or forty years. That seemed bold at the time. Today, it seems rather modest. The unipolar moment has become the unipolar era. It remains true, however, that its durability will be decided at home. It will depend largely on whether it is welcomed by Americans or seen as a burden to be shed—either because we are too good for the world (the isolationist critique) or because we are not worthy of it (the liberal internationalist critique).

The new unilateralism argues explicitly and unashamedly for maintaining unipolarity, for sustaining America’s unrivaled dominance for the foreseeable future. It could be a long future, assuming we successfully manage the single greatest threat, namely, weapons of mass destruction in the hands of rogue states. This in itself will require the aggressive and confident application of unipolar power rather than falling back, as we did in the 1990s, on paralyzing multilateralism. The future of the unipolar era hinges on whether America is governed by those who wish to retain, augment and use unipolarity to advance not just American but global ends, or whether America is governed by those who wish to give it up—either by allowing unipolarity to decay as they retreat to Fortress America, or by passing on the burden by gradually transferring power to multilateral institutions as heirs to American hegemony. The challenge to unipolarity is not from the outside but from the inside. The choice is ours. To impiously paraphrase Benjamin Franklin: History has given you an empire, if you will keep it. □

¹⁴The most recent and dramatic demonstration of this newfound cooperation was the CIA killing on November 4 of an Al-Qaeda leader in Yemen using a remotely operated Predator drone.

NATO's initial expansion eastwards in the 1990s, and the phase of expansion set to spring from the Prague Summit in November of this year, will complete its transformation from an organization of collective defense to an organization of collective security. On the whole, the expansion of NATO will continue to contribute to European stability, especially if it is anchored by Russian cooperation at one end and by a continued American presence at the other. But as a collective security organization of many diverse states, it is likely to be more talkative and less active than in the past, and more political than military in basic orientation.

This is no bad thing; but it's not the same thing. Europe is no longer a strategic preoccupation for the United States, so NATO is no longer the pre-eminent multilateral vehicle for America's strategic objectives. We have shelved the idea that NATO, acting in its entirety as an alliance, might act as an effective security instrument outside of Europe, except perhaps in a kind of UN-sponsored peace-keeping or monitoring role. There is a particular irony in the fact that the events of September 11, 2001 moved NATO for the first time in its history to invoke Article 5—the clause that says an attack on one is an attack on all—a mandate for which the United States was grateful but that it had no intention of using.

Moreover, the European Union continues to pursue its goal of an autonomous military capability. That is no bad thing either, at least in theory. But in Washington, this European project is viewed with considerable skepticism, first because it will further dilute the importance of the Alliance, and second, because it is not taken seriously, least of all by the European governments who evince great reluctance to invest in their own capabilities. More likely now, Americans believe, the EU quest for its own defense force will end up as a European contraption designed to serve a political purpose, and will come to look like a military version of the Common Agricultural Policy.

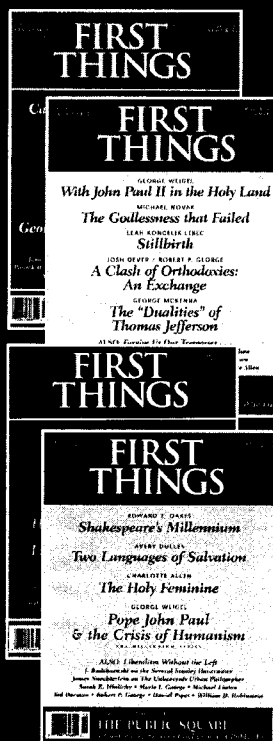
Given how profoundly the Alliance is changing, it is revealing that the Americans have been so calm about it. After all, once the next phase of expansion is finished, the American nuclear guarantee will extend to within a few kilometers of St. Petersburg. But with the multiplication of membership, with the development of a European Force that may have more in common with Potemkin than with Clausewitz, and with America's overriding strategic concerns lying outside the Atlantic area, the Alliance is becoming a trifle phantasmagorical.

That being so, there is an argument which says that Atlantic relations are not well served by a NATO that has such a hollow ring to it, and that it might be more effective, as well as more realistic, to dismantle an increasingly cumbersome and unfocused organization and replace it—as far as Britain and the United States are concerned—with a bilateral Atlantic treaty that does not pretend to be more than it is. For the moment, however, this is premature speculation.

This all seems a little messy. It is a little messy. But as Mark Twain said about Wagner's music, "It's better than it sounds."

—Raymond Seitz, from The Bryant Lecture
(Eccles Centre, British Library), June 12, 2002

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All the Way

Crafting a U.S.-Russian Alliance

Robert Legvold

RUSSIA AND the United States both stand on the verge of fundamental foreign policy choices likely to change dramatically their mutual relationship and, quite possibly, much more besides. For Russia, the choice centers on how thoroughgoing an alignment with the West it should pursue; for the United States, the choice centers on how thoroughgoing should be the independent assertion of its power. Choosing in the Russian case depends on how fully the leadership persuades itself, and then the Russian political class, that a changing international environment requires a change in the Russian approach—one that cuts free from habitual fears and addresses factors crucial to national welfare and progress. Choosing in the U.S. case has less to do with the elite's conception of international challenges than with the scope and methods of dealing with them. If the Russians make a dramatic *conceptual* choice, the effect on U.S.-Russian relations could be profound and positive. In contrast, if the United States makes a particular *strategic* choice, the effect on those relations could be major and negative, and the potential for a truly beneficial U.S.-Russian alliance may be lost.

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Understanding why this is so and what is at stake requires a deeper look at what has happened to Russian foreign policy in the year since September 11, 2001. Dramatic as Vladimir Putin's instantaneous support for the United States was, and important as Russian cooperation in the campaign against global terrorism has been, it is the *basis* of this shift that should focus our attention. Putin's foreign policy is no tactical foray. Rather, he and his domestic allies have settled a critical ambivalence that plagued the country's foreign policy before September 11, one that had left Russia torn between competing images of the outside world.

Until then, for many within the foreign policy establishment and, it seemed, a part of Putin himself, the international setting remained a traditionally menacing place. It was a world where the state of military balances mattered; where the assertion of U.S. power constituted a challenge to be thwarted; where NATO's expansion toward Russian borders assumed first-rank importance, and its actions over Kosovo posed a direct threat; and where the virtues of a longed-for multipolar order served as standard mantra. Yet for others, including another part of Putin, the world was increasingly engulfed by globalization, and there, amid the tyranny of global capital flows, the refinement of trading agglomerations and

an information and communications revolution, the fate of Russia's own transformation would be decided. This was a place of geo-economics, not geostrategy; a place of arbitrage and export, not power plays and arms races.

It is this second world that President Putin now stresses, and thus it is clear in retrospect that his aligning Russia with the United States in the struggle against Al-Qaeda and the Taliban was but an eye-catching manifestation of a more basic strategic decision to throw Russia's lot in with the West. By so doing, Putin not only put an end to much post-Cold War uncertainty and equivocation, but also reconciled himself to what can only be a junior partnership with the United States—one in which Russia's ability to contest objectionable U.S. policies may be no greater than that of any U.S. ally, and perhaps a good deal less than some.

For those Russians still of the old view, Putin's concessions appear not merely misguided, but treasonous. In May, the leader of the Communist Party, Gennady Zyuganov, condemned a policy that "threatens the very existence of the country." In his angry recital:

Reliable allies have been sold out. Russian bases in Vietnam and Cuba vital for our country's security have been closed. American soldiers have appeared in Central Asia and in Georgia. Soon U.S. aircraft will land at the airfields of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. The CIS and Russia have already been proclaimed as within the sphere of the U.S. vital interests. The strategic encirclement of Russia is being completed with the full consent of Mr. Putin and his team.¹

But Putin and his critics are ships passing in the night. Not only does the president no longer share even partially their view of the threats posed by the outside world, he has adopted an entirely different foreign policy agenda from theirs.

This is not to deny that Putin's new direction has roots in the period before September 2001 or to suggest that all his concerns over NATO, the U.S. nuclear posture or manifestations of U.S. unilateralism have evaporated. But it is important to recognize how different is the order of tasks on which he is fixed from that of two or three years ago.

Russia's New Agenda

V LADIMIR Putin's overriding priority is to synchronize his domestic and foreign policy agendas, which inevitably means featuring economics. Not by chance has the focus of Putin's last two "state of the union" addresses to parliament been devoted overwhelmingly to domestic issues, with only a few fleeting paragraphs on foreign policy—and even these few paragraphs have had mainly to do with economic issues. In this year's address, for example, he opened his comments on foreign policy by discussing the World Trade Organization and closed by stressing that "a fundamental feature of the contemporary world is the internationalization of the economy and society." Russia, he said, "no longer [has] a choice of whether or not to integrate into the world economic space."

This shift in priorities radiates throughout Russia's foreign policy, and has three critical effects. First, it diminishes the urgency and immanence of alternative preoccupations. NATO's evolution and activities lose their centrality; the massive U.S. military advantage, its imperious approach to designing the strategic nuclear regime of the future, even the arrival of U.S. troops on former Soviet territory, all loom less large; and the need to watch, catlike, for any encroachment

¹Zyuganov, "Our Defensive Shield Is Going into Ruin", *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, May 18, 2002.

on Russia's strategic positions in bordering regions shrinks.

Second, the reordering of priorities leaves room for Russians to rethink old assumptions. Rather than accent latent traces of U.S.-Russian rivalry—including a not-so-latent strategic competition within post-Soviet space—those of the new perspective emphasize instead that “Russia’s and the United States’ geopolitical interests don’t contradict each other; in fact, they tend to coincide.”² Looked at objectively, they argue, by bringing down the Taliban regime and forcing Al-Qaeda on the run, the United States did what Russia could not do for itself—reduce the security threat from its south. On other pressing security issues, too—the spread of weapons of mass destruction, fighting terrorism, enhancing energy security, or even stabilizing Russia’s northeast frontier in Asia—Russia and the United States have common interests that ought to lead to common endeavors. This is not just talk. The weakening of old fears and the incipient rethinking of security interests have already given rise to more constructive approaches to issues that once vexed U.S.-Russian relations. For example, the trade-off between the new NATO-Russia Council and a new Russian equanimity in the face of further NATO expansion would not have been possible if not for the shift in Russian attitudes that preceded them. Nor, almost surely, would the Moscow Treaty have sufficed to offset the unilateral U.S. abrogation of the ABM Treaty and its determination to do with its strategic forces as it chooses.

Third, because of the fundamental turn in Russian foreign policy, the basis for a radically different U.S.-Russian relationship now exists. In short, Putin’s new agenda permits a new and positive U.S.-Russian agenda. No longer, say partisans of the Putin approach, need Washington and Moscow concentrate

on preventing the negative; the two countries can now combine strengths to pursue a positive joint security agenda. After all, Putin rallied to the U.S. side so swiftly after September 11 not merely because he sensed an opportunity, but because he felt that his own earlier drumbeat of concern over international terrorism had been vindicated. Beyond the problem of terrorism, supporters of Russia’s new approach envisage the United States and Russia as partners managing what Dmitry Trenin calls “strategic stability” in the 21st century. This has to do less with the nuclear balance between the two powers and more with the need to counter “the growing danger of further proliferation of WMDs and their use in regional crises”, most of which are nearer Russia than North America. Trenin sees Russian-American cooperation in developing theater missile defense as part of this effort, and trends in official circles, too, are moving in this direction.³

Putin has also put energy partnership squarely on the new agenda. Beginning with a February 11 *Wall Street Journal* interview, he has stressed Russia’s potential as a reliable alternative to traditional Middle Eastern sources of oil and natural gas. Rapid movement in this direction, from the May Moscow summit through the Houston “energy summit” in September, reflects genuinely reinforcing interests. If its oil production goes from today’s 7.7 million barrels per day to a planned 9.5 million by 2010, Russia will need the U.S. market; and the United States, even were it to commandeer Iraqi oil fields, will need Russia’s help to stabilize international oil markets.

²Andrei Piontkovsky, “Problems for the Foreign-Policy Elite”, *Russia Journal*, March 15–21, 2002.

³Trenin, “Sealing a New Era in U.S.-Russian Relations”, *Moscow Times*, May 27, 2002.

Finally, Russians apply the word “partnership”, albeit somewhat more gingerly in this case, to evoke the two countries’ common stake in seeing China safely integrated into the international community. Some stress the importance of promoting China’s continued domestic evolution into a responsible and predictable actor on the international stage. Others focus on guaranteeing a strong Russian presence in its own Far East, lest Chinese power too easily flow across the border. But either way, addressing the challenge of China forms another key area of potential U.S.-Russian cooperation.

In this sense, the new arrangement between Russia and NATO is but a prototype of the relationship Putin and his allies have in mind. The promise of this venture owes as much to the new agenda being addressed as to the new mechanism by which Russia is to be included. In the struggle against global terrorism, the effort to control weapons of mass destruction and the management of regional conflicts—the heart of this new agenda—NATO, as both sides understand, needs Russia. The mechanism of the NATO-Russia Council, therefore, has an intrinsic value that its predecessor, the Permanent Joint Council, lacked, designed as it was to deal primarily with Russian discontents. Not surprisingly, therefore, “NATO at 20” in the half year of its existence is already off to a far more constructive start than the PJC. It is seriously at work on assessing terrorist threats, planning airspace management and joint training exercises, discussing problems of crisis management, considering theater missile defense, and coordinating efforts to secure fissile material wherever possible (as was demonstrated by U.S.-Russian cooperation in removing more than 100 pounds of enriched uranium from Serbia’s Vinca nuclear reactor last August).⁴

False Perils

WHERE ARE the obstacles to an effective Russian-American alliance? What could prevent President Putin’s preferences from carrying the day?

Three hazards, alone or in some combination, compose the typical answer. The first is opposition at home. Putin’s new course has been very much at his own initiative, and while he is supported by narrow though powerful strands of the political elite, skepticism remains among a broad spectrum of the Russian political and analytical community. Second, many have assumed that Putin cannot persist if his concessions are not reciprocated or rewarded by the U.S. side, and this, it is argued, the Bush Administration has failed to do. And third, others suspect that Putin himself endangers a far-reaching change in U.S.-Russian relations by mistakenly assuming that he can have his cake and eat it too: that he can pursue improved bilateral relations with the United States while continuing to cut deals with Iran, Iraq and North Korea that ignore important U.S. interests.

Dangers do exist, but not in these forms. Putin’s new course does face opposition at home, but deep-seated resistance to the essence of the policy is confined to increasingly marginal political groupings such as the Communist Party and pockets in the bureaucracy. Bureaucratic obstinacy, particularly in the military and among some in the foreign ministry, can nick the policy and distort this or that element of it. It is true, too, that support among a broader portion of the political class has been tepid, but this is not because its leading voices have a

⁴In this regard see Graham Allison and Andrei Kokoshin, “The New Containment: An Alliance Against Nuclear Terrorism”, *The National Interest* (Fall 2002).

better idea. Less do they object to the broad thrust of the policy than to specific aspects of its implementation.

Putin, however, so towers over the Russian political scene that little of this threatens to knock him off course, and he does have allies among the business elite and the key economic ministries. Only if Putin's general political position disintegrates will critics of his foreign policy have an opening, and that is only likely if Russia slides into serious economic difficulty. While not out of the question, economic trouble on this scale appears improbable any time soon.

The second concern—that the new policy will reap too scant an American payoff—ignores two factors: Putin has not framed the policy as a horse trade, but has made clear that he seeks a larger, overarching set of changes; and the Bush Administration *has* responded at this level. As Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said in an October 24 interview, “The Cold War is over. The time now is one of cooperation between the two nations, not as it was of rivalry or competition.”⁵ The clearest expression of what the administration has in mind came in a June 1 speech by Richard Haass, the director of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff. “U.S.-Russian relations”, he said, “are of course still evolving from a Cold War relationship dominated by efforts to prevent what we could do to one another to a new post-post-Cold War one based on promoting what we can do with each other.” He emphasized that the “most important and challenging task at this stage is to define a long-term positive agenda for the bilateral relationship”, one that “has to be about more than eliminating old Cold War threats and fighting terrorism, important as those are. The relationship must be based on new opportunities for cooperation.” As to those new opportunities, Haass' list is not much different from the Russian list: energy coop-

eration, the economic development of the Russian Far East, cooperation in Central Asia, and what Haass termed “the large and demanding multilateral agenda” extending from “managing regional crises such as those in the Middle East and South Asia” to “transnational challenges such as HIV/AIDS, drugs, and human trafficking.”⁶

The third concern—that Russian maneuvering or double-dealing in its ongoing policies toward Iran, Iraq and North Korea will intrude—misconstrues this dimension of Russian policy. Russia's rapprochement with the West, historic as it is, does not and cannot mean that Russia will abandon its interests in relations with these three countries—or, for that matter, with China and India—just because they are not to U.S. tastes. But, if the argument here is correct, Putin will pursue these interests within the limits of what the traffic will bear in quest of his larger foreign policy objectives.

As a case in point, while Putin wants to protect long-term Russian economic interests in Iraq, including LUKoil's majority stake in the 11 billion-barrel Qurna oil field, and while he means to subject U.S. action as much as possible to UN Security Council oversight, he will not likely fall on his sword to prevent the United States from moving militarily against Iraq. Similarly, while Putin, the Ministry of Atomic Energy and the Russian domestic nuclear industry are eager to complete the \$800 million Bushehr reactor in Iran (and perhaps follow-on projects as well), they seem likely to insist on the return of spent fuel to Russia and the promised international inspection regime pursuant to those pro-

⁵Rumsfeld interviewed by *Valeurs Actuelles* (Paris), November 1, 2002, p. 35.

⁶Haass, “U.S.-Russian Relations in the Post-Post-Cold War World”, Remarks to RAND Business Leaders Forum, New York, NY, June 1, 2002.

jects. If Tehran balks, the deal may well come unglued. In sum, what might be thought of as “out of area” issues in a future U.S.-Russian alliance may well raise difficulties, just as such issues have often troubled NATO partners over the years. But if a common agenda conforms to core national interests on both sides, and if indeed national interest is the main currency of mutual understanding between Moscow and Washington, then these issues need not destroy the larger partnership.

Real Perils

IF NOT THESE commonly assumed perils, then what does threaten Putin’s new course and the prospect of a radically recast U.S.-Russian relationship? An initial threat arises from the impediments to Russia’s rapid integration into international economic institutions, but that is the easy part. Beyond that stand three vastly more formidable challenges.

As to this initial impediment, it is clear that Putin may struggle to find second gear. Entry into the World Trade Organization will require wrenching decisions affecting the economic interests of powerfully entrenched actors within Russia—indeed, whole industrial sectors such as aluminum, steel, civil aviation, food processing and pharmaceuticals. It will also require the revision of a vast range of legislation: as many as a thousand laws are at issue. Promoting Russia’s integration with (not into) the European Union promises to be still more difficult. At every turn, the process will involve potentially disruptive “two-level games”, to use the political science term, which is to say that national leaders will have to engage external and domestic parties simultaneously. Even a two-level game between the United States and the EU over, say, steel quotas, is fractious

enough—and that is when all players on both sides are familiar to one another and the game has long since been legitimated. When such players and games are neither familiar nor legitimated, it is likely to produce far less modulated political effects—as can already be seen, for example, in both the WTO talks and the Russian-EU dialogue.

Difficult as these processes will be, they are far less demanding than the three larger challenges at hand. The first of these concerns the fate of political trends within Russia itself. One need not share the bitter view of many Russian democrats that Putin’s turn toward the West rests on a Faustian bargain to appreciate how fast the idea of a deep and durable partnership with Russia will shrivel if Russia’s advance to democracy falters.⁷ The notion that Putin has rushed to the U.S. side in order to secure a free hand in Chechnya or a free pass from Western criticism in repressing civil liberties both claims too much and does too little to explain the shift in Russian foreign policy. Still, the basic issue of what Russia is to be, not merely what it wants to do, remains. The simple historical fact is that the United States does not have enduring alliances with major powers that are not democracies.

Putin’s notion of “managed democracy” does not turn him into a despot or even an autocrat-in-the-making; it only suggests that the ultimate foundation for Russian-American partnership is yet to be established. The communiqués that Putin and Bush sign speak of common interests and common values. Common interests there are; common values are yet to be fully demonstrated. In the meantime, frictions over human rights violations by an overzealous Russian intelligence agency,

⁷For an example of this view, see Dmitry Furman, “The Flight of the Two-Headed Eagle”, *Obshchaya gazeta*, May 30, 2002.

government intimidation of the press and media, and, in particular, brutality in Chechnya will undermine the sense of true partnership engendered by cooperation in other spheres. The alternative—Washington's looking the other way—would be worse, however. For the United States to soft-pedal Russian shortcomings in order to protect Moscow's cooperation in, say, the war on terrorism would implicitly, albeit unintentionally, derogate the very idea of a more substantial U.S.-Russian alliance. Democrats in Russia have long seen Russia's integration into the West as critical to eventual democratization in their country. But for Russia to be integrated into the West there must be convincing and sustained progress toward democracy. Putin, in his foreign policy, has gone a long way toward integration. Ultimately, however, if he means to complete the journey, his policies at home must be reinforcing.

The second of the three grand challenges cuts to the heart of the broad, basic foreign policy choice facing the United States. It has to do essentially with the ends to which U.S. power is applied, and the extent to which they incorporate or, alternatively, disregard the ends allies would have the United States pursue. Russia is no longer the focal point of the U.S. foreign policy agenda, and certainly the Bush Administration will not accord Russia a veto over critical American decisions anymore than it accords a veto to Germany or France. Nevertheless, as with other U.S. allies, how the administration sets its course, as much as what course it sets, will do much to define the limits of Russian policy. Much of the Russian foreign policy elite has come to accept that U.S. primacy in the first part of the 21st century is overwhelming and likely to endure. Most also believe that the Bush Administration will be ruthless in using its power—not against Russia, but against the states that it sees as immediate dan-

gers. Those states would be, first, Iraq, but then in short order Iran, maybe Syria, perhaps even Saudi Arabia (and, if things go very wrong there, Pakistan). Because they see Iraq as only a first step, they conjure up images of spreading disorder to their south; of outcast regimes redoubling their efforts to acquire nuclear weapons; and, coupled with U.S. determination to preserve unchallengeable military superiority, an intensifying U.S. military competition with China.⁸

Were such a U.S. policy to unfold, the strong tendency within this elite would not be to press Russia's leadership to take the lead, or even to join in directly resisting U.S. policy. Rather the push would be to stay clear of entanglement with U.S. policy to the extent possible, and here is where the problem would arise for Putin's new course. It is not that an unrestrained U.S. policy would render Putin's alignment with the United States untenable because of the domestic opposition it would engender; it is more that Putin himself would demur. Washington must therefore understand that the essence of the problem, as Russians see it, no longer arises so much from the fact of U.S. preponderance or even from its tendency toward unilateralism. The essence resides in the ends to which U.S. power is put and the discomforting sense that these may not serve Russia well. To the degree that the Bush Administration ignores this side of the problem, or reduces it to calibrating mere multilateral gestures against unilateral actions, it will constrain severely Putin's option of deciding in favor of a deepening relationship with the United States.

⁸See, for example, "Remarks at a Round Table on Iraq, Georgia, Bush Doctrine, and Russian-American Relations", *Mosfilmovskaya*, October 2, 2002 (as reported by the Federal News Service at www.fednews.ru).

The last of the three major perils rests at the conceptual level. It is inauspicious when the most elaborate and sophisticated—indeed, the only elaborate and sophisticated—assessment of a radically different U.S.-Russian relationship comes from the level of an assistant secretary of state. Haass' June 1 speech echoes the spirit of comments made by President Bush, Secretary Powell, Secretary Rumsfeld and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice on various occasions, but none, including the President in his five meetings with Putin, has yet provided a conceptually coherent outline of the outcome America seeks. The Joint Declaration signed by the two countries at the May Moscow summit promises that "we are achieving a new strategic relationship." It commits the two sides to "cooperate to advance stability, security, and economic integration, and to jointly counter global challenges and to help resolve regional conflicts." But there is little evidence that the administration has a clear notion of this new strategic relationship, either of what its conceptual anchor or primary purpose should be or, therefore, how to define its success or failure.

The Core of Cooperation

THE NEW agenda in U.S.-Russian relations, constructive as it is for now, still falls short of its historic possibilities. Viewed in proper perspective, the evolution under way in Russian foreign policy, if fostered, opens the prospect of going beyond temporary cooperation all the way to a genuine alliance. The point is not a formal treaty, but a psychological leap by which each side comes to trust the other as an ally, to believe that on the most vital international issues they have a common purpose and that where there is disagreement, it is between friends, not opponents. It is a reach, but it is a wise reach.

If this idea seems far-fetched to some, it is, first, because the revolution occurring in Russian foreign policy is not yet clear to them, even as the suspicion of Russian double-dealing still looms large in the back of many peoples' minds; second, because so few have thought through what such an alliance would be about; and, third, because the new direction in Russian policy seems still fragile, appearing to be virtually one mortal man's work.

On the last score, were Putin gone tomorrow, the thrust of the new Russian policy would doubtless lose some momentum, but it would not collapse. Putin, after all, is not so much inventing a policy that transcends events as he is adjusting to realities that no Russian leader can escape. In the end, whether an alternative leadership would pursue an accommodation leading to a U.S.-Russian alliance depends more on the course of U.S. policy than on the vagaries of Russian politics.

So what might animate a U.S.-Russian alliance? The core focus can and should be stability and mutual security in and around the Eurasian land mass. This focus operates through three geographical lenses: Russia itself and its near European periphery; Russia's south; and China's western periphery.

First, as Alexander Vershbow, the current U.S. ambassador in Moscow, puts it: "Russia is the most important key to the stability of Eurasia", without which neither Europe nor Asia—two regions in which the United States has vital interests—can "be stable and prosperous."⁹ As long as Russia respects the sovereignty of the former Soviet republics, the United States has every reason to cooperate with Russia in stabilizing and aiding those

⁹Vershbow, "Russia, the United States, and the Challenges of the 21st Century", Remarks at the Moscow School of Political Studies, July 22, 2002.

states. In this regard, as well as others, alliance does not mean condominium; U.S.-Russian collaboration must not imply a readiness to decide matters over the heads of Russia's neighbors. On the contrary, an alliance's purpose would be to strengthen their sovereignty and vitality. A key example of the subtle way in which the revolution in Russian foreign policy makes this kind of alliance possible concerns Belarus. Putin's new agenda has led to a sharp cooling in Russia's relations with Alexander Lukashenka's regime. As a consequence, a leadership that flouts the values on which modern European security is based is increasingly isolated, the prospect of a Russian-Belarusian union has faded, and Ukraine's fears of encirclement have eased. Although not perfectly parallel, U.S. and Russian interests in Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova now converge sufficiently to make promoting stability and successful reform there a matter of common U.S. and Russian ground.

Second, to borrow the formulation of Alexei Bogaturov, in the 21st century no longer is peninsular Europe or Northeast Asia the critical "strategic rear" of the United States, but the vast turbulent region stretching from eastern Turkey to western China and along Russia's south.¹⁰ As the United States girds to cope with the threats emanating from this area, no country brings more value as a potential ally than Russia. As things stand, the United States has backed into Central Asia with military power as part of the war against terrorism, and in the process it has offered quasi-security commitments to its new partners, almost certainly without careful consideration of their wider implication.¹¹ Central Asia forms the unstable core of Inner Asia; it is an area—the only one in the world—surrounded by four nuclear powers, two of whom recently teetered on the brink of war. It contains multiple points of friction—from

Kashmir to the Fergana Valley to north-west Kazakhstan to China's Xinjiang province. Each of these points is capable of bleeding into a larger conflict, and of strengthening WMD proliferation and terrorism. It is populated by regimes whose stability is universally suspect, and contains wealth—particularly in energy resources—that will make it increasingly important to both Asian and European consumers.

Not only are the United States and Russia directly but separately implicated in the stability of this region, but China is as well. This raises the third aspect of a U.S.-Russian alliance to enhance Eurasian stability. China will be a decisive actor in Inner Asia, not the least because it forms an integral part of the region. Unfortunately, China enters through its underdeveloped northwest territories, including Xinjiang—precisely where it feels most vulnerable. In part because of this sense of vulnerability, and in part because of the general state of Sino-American relations, China has not welcomed the arrival of American military power in Central Asia. On the contrary, while excusing a temporary deployment in the context of a war that it supports, China's leadership has opposed an extended U.S. presence there as an element of a hostile encirclement stratagem.

Russia and the United States have good reason to act jointly, not only to enhance their common stake in regional stability, but to draw China into a constructive dialogue over the role all three will play in Central Asia. Russia, with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, is already engaged in such an effort. Talking to the Russians about U.S. military activi-

¹⁰Bogaturov, "Russia-U.S.: Is It Rapprochement or a Political Game?", *Vek* (May 2002).

¹¹Note A.J. Bacevich, "Steppes to Empire", *The National Interest* (Summer 2002).

ties in Central Asia (and Georgia) builds mutual confidence by promoting transparency, but it is not so far-fetched to imagine a far more ambitious trilateral dialogue among Russia, China, and the United States. Much as the United States and its European allies share assessments of threats at the edges of Europe, plan for coordinated action, and struggle to create the necessary machinery to carry it out, so can and should Russia and the United States do the same in Eurasia with Chinese participation when appropriate.

High Stakes

RUSSIA AND the United States allied against the new century's primary strategic threats, particularly those emanating from within and around the Eurasian land mass, would have much the same significance in the emerging international order as key U.S. alliances have had in the past. Even more so will this be the case if the alliance is underpinned by Russia's successful integration into the international economy and its safe passage to democracy.

Not insignificantly, movement toward alliance also has the advantage of blocking movement in the opposite direction. This is a rare moment in history. For the time being, and almost uniquely in the last three centuries of international politics, strategic rivalry among the major powers has disappeared. None of them defines any of the others as a primary security threat; none strains to amass military power against another; and none labors with alliances intended to thwart aggressive designs assigned to another. Given its weakness, Russia could not, even if it wished, turn itself into a global rival of the United States anytime soon. Within its own neighborhood, however, it is less disadvantaged. If events flow in the other

direction, if Putin or someone to follow decides that alignment with the United States is not worth the candle, this key region could be one of the first places where this historic blessing begins to fade.

It is not difficult to imagine what such rivalry could be about. An incipient jostling between the United States and Russia in the post-Soviet space began in the 1990s, complete with competition over energy pipeline routes and the mutual nurturing of alignments with favored states, leading in turn to the polarization of regional groupings (such as GUUAM and the collective security cluster within the Commonwealth of Independent States).¹² While these trends have dissipated, none has disappeared, and in some Russian quarters they simmer unabated, sustained by U.S. troops on former Soviet soil and the impending enlargement of NATO across former Soviet borders.

Additionally, without a great deal of imagination one can conjure renewed trouble over strategic military developments. This is and will remain a nuclear world. While U.S. attention is rightly focused these days on preventing outlaw states and groups from arming themselves with nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, ultimately the nuclear superstructure will be determined by the major nuclear powers. Currently, U.S. preponderance has permitted the United States to dictate the shape of the U.S.-Russian nuclear relationship, and Putin has prudently bowed to an outcome he cannot pre-

¹²GUUAM is the acronym for the joint undertaking among Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Moldova intended to coordinate security and economic interests among these five states. Although Uzbekistan withdrew this past year, the group remains something of a counterpoise to Russian-led enterprises within the larger region.

vent. In the process, he and parts of the Russian security establishment are coming to accept the possibility of working with the United States and its NATO allies on the future role of missile defense.

But these are opening gambits in an ongoing process, leading in unknown directions—probably into space and the uncertainties that competition there will bring, and to a set of Chinese responses that will further complicate the Indo-Pakistani nuclear nexus and perhaps draw Japan across the nuclear threshold. The United States may for some time enjoy technological leads, permitting it by means of its own choosing to cope with the threats that lie ahead. In the modern era, however, history has been hard on states that assumed they could unilaterally impose a security order of their own devising and make it last. If, on the other hand, Russia is America's ally and not merely a reluctantly compliant foil, the United States would have much more leverage in designing a nuclear regime drained of competitive pressures among established nuclear powers, and thus more capable of circumscribing the behavior of new and would-be nuclear states.

In this light, it cannot be a good thing when Russians who are the strongest advocates of cooperation with the United States find it necessary to defend the Moscow Treaty by trumpeting effects that scarcely contribute to a more stable strategic nuclear regime. Sergei Rogov, for example, the director of the Institute for the Study of the USA and Canada, praises the agreement for proving again that Russia remains the only nuclear interlocutor the United States deems worthy of engaging; for restoring Russia's MIRV option; and for exempting Russia's large store of tactical nuclear weapons from arms control at a time when, because of weaknesses in

conventional capabilities, "present Russian military doctrine puts much greater stress on nuclear containment than the Pentagon."¹³

MOVING the U.S.-Russian relationship to the level of a true alliance will not be easy, considering that the two countries have only allied three times in a century and a half, and then only briefly during wartime. Nor should the idea be embraced without eyes wide-open, weighing fully its implications and recognizing its requirements. The changes under way in Russian foreign policy, however, make such a relationship thinkable, and think we should, for the stakes are high. Consider how different the world would be in twenty years if a democratic and economically revitalized Russia is a genuine partner of the United States, addressing side by side fundamental threats to international comity and welfare. Consider how much safer the world would be if no great power is locked in strategic rivalry with another, and no combination of them is lined up against one or more others. And consider how much more successful the United States would be if its ends and methods are increasingly seen by other major players as wise and fair.

Whether any or some of this comes to pass will depend in no small measure on what is made of the current historic opportunity in U.S.-Russian relations. So, we are brought back to the fundamental choices facing Russia and the United States. We are about to see how far Russia is prepared to go toward a deep and lasting partnership with the United States, and how much the United States is prepared to do to make it possible. □

¹³Rogov, "Is It Surrender or Transition to Partnership?" *Nezavisimoye Voennoye Obozrenie*, May 24–30, 2002.

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Sonderweg

The Closing of the German Mind

Uwe Siemon-Netto

THE GERMANS are always late, wrote Thomas Mann, and the results of Germany's elections this past September surely count as evidence. Most of what used to be called Western Europe during the Cold War has turned its back on the left-wing, high-tax crypto-utopianism that has long stifled its economic development and warped its political culture. But by re-electing Gerhard Schröder's "red-green" coalition, German voters have precluded a long overdue modernization of their economy and society. They may also have saddled themselves with the reigning political elite for another eight years—such is suggested by the pattern of postwar German politics—and the inability of this elite to generate positive change risks leaving the door open for all sorts of demons and derelict ideas to fill a widening vacuum.

What was truly odd about the election campaign was that the leaders of an economy and a society that are widely acknowledged to be stuck in a rut were barely able to discuss any of the serious issues afflicting the country. (The loser, the Christian Democratic Union's standard-bearer, Edmund Stoiber, tried to raise the problems of a rigid labor market

and educational decline—just two of at least two dozen such issues—but he did not do so well at it.) This suggests that all of the superficial explanations we have heard to explain the results are not really adequate to the task.

Such explanations are by no means in short supply. Yes, it is true that this election was more media-driven than previous campaigns, and that Schröder is rugged and handsome while Stoiber is gray and somewhat wooden. Yes, many Germans believed that a social-democratic party more disposed to the welfare state ethic was a cushier choice for troubled economic times. Yes, the SPD's relative strength in urban areas and among younger voters was magnified slightly by demographic changes. Yes, east Germans provided the margin of the red-green victory, both because of the government's efficient response to the summer floods and because the formerly communist Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) experienced a natural falling off of popularity a dozen years after reunification. Yes, too, Schröder's anti-Bush, antiwar tactics worked at the margin in a close vote, particularly in the east. Some of these theories, perhaps all of them, may be true, yet none of them gets to the meaning of this election for German political culture and Germany's future.

Three other themes that live at a

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deeper causal level, however, may unearth this meaning. The first of these concerns the pacifist sentiment rooted in Germany's modern history. The second concerns the effect of the 1968 student rebellion and the Left's "Long March through the institutions." The third has to do with a peculiar German susceptibility to utopian fancy, which has bedeviled the country's politics for centuries. It is with these themes, and how they played into the September election, that this essay is concerned.

Haunting Memories

SOME AMERICANS find it difficult to grasp the collective nightmare of World War II, the searing memory of its devastation and shame, that still haunts Germans. A significant segment of Germany's 82 million citizens—and here I include myself—is still traumatized by childhood experiences in air-raid shelters: by the blast of blockbuster bombs detonating around them; by basement walls cracking open, allowing waves of fire and smoke to roll into cellars full of women and children. I remember my family taking an aunt's ring finger to its grave because this was the only identifiable part of her body found in the rubble of her Leipzig apartment building. I recall going to school every morning after a bombardment—if indeed the school building was still standing—and learning during roll call that Heinz, Ernst, Helmut or Rudi was dead, killed at age seven or eight. I still have memories of the famine after the war, when we were allowed a mere 700 calories a day in the Soviet zone of occupation, and, worse, the shame that gripped us when we learned of the genocide that our government had committed in our name. It was a shame that made many of us pretend to be something else when

we first hitchhiked abroad in the 1950s or 1960s—Luxembourgers, Dutch, Alsatians or Swiss, for example.

These memories, passed on to subsequent generations, have become a fixture of the German national soul. They explain our discomfort with our history—not only the recent Nazi past, but also more benign periods that preceded it. Walk through Germany's towns and villages and you see at every step unsightly architectural testimonies to this phenomenon. Once beautiful apartment blocks built after the Franco-Prussian War now resemble grim casernes because the state paid their owners to hack away at the stucco to make them look "modern." Many medieval town centers that had survived the air war were razed and replaced by soulless concrete structures. Farmers plastered over the Tudor-style exterior walls of their homes to make them look "contemporary." By destroying witnesses to their history and turning "progressive", postwar Germans had hoped, in effect, to get rid of Hitler. As it turned out, we got rid of much of our history while Hitler's shadow nevertheless remained.

Germany, then, is still not a "normal" country like France. In a sense, it resembles *Hans im Schnokeloch*, the caricature of its Alsatian cousin west of the Rhine. *Schnokeloch* is a hole in the ground in which Hans hides from mosquitoes. Occasionally he sticks his head out, spots the advancing beasts—meaning German or French forces—and quickly ducks again. Germany has become one large Alsace. The mere mention of an American-led war against Iraq sent us down into our hole, and while this cannot explain in any simple or direct way recent German behavior at the polls, it shows how easy it is for a populist of Schröder's stripe to exploit the country's trauma for selfish purposes.

So here we are, 82 million people on a Wyoming-sized plot of land, peering

anxiously across ten open borders and pretending that we live by ourselves, fighting our nightmares out of consciousness through our near manic pursuit of the post-historical, of the modern. And Germany is nothing if not modern. We have “gay pride parades” like the Americans, bourgeois teens pimp-walking around town in grunge garments like ghetto kids in the United States, and we outdo any American social engineer in sheer folly. We have been known, for example, to send juvenile felons on “therapeutic” adventure trips to New Zealand, accompanied by a social worker, at taxpayers’ expense. Like the Americans, too, we bastardize our language with politically-correct neologisms; we call this *Dummddeutsch* (“dumb German”). We no longer say “*Guten Morgen*”, but “Hi, Brigitte, wow”, not knowing what this signifies; it just sounded good last night on television. Our feminists can out-snarl their American counterparts, as well, and we have guitar-strumming pastors blessing same-sex unions and experimenting liturgically with heavy metal clamor in the vain hope of filling their empty churches.

Yet these superficial attributes of modern cosmopolitanism notwithstanding, Germany is parochial. It is because its parochialism is so deep, in fact, that its expressions of cosmopolitan modernism are so over-the-top. Few of its most modern, progressive leaders speak a foreign language competently; the current chancellor certainly doesn’t, and so it is fitting that during his successful election campaign he stressed a new—a modern—German *Sonderweg*, a new autonomous national path. He did this even though Germany is utterly dependent on foreign trade, especially with the United States, which he so crassly offended. And most of those around him helping to govern Germany thought all this not the least bit odd.

The 68ers’ Long March

THOSE WHO now run this not-yet-normal Germany are mostly “graduates” of a student protest movement that, to hear their own chroniclers describe it, rebelled against the stuffiness and authoritarianism of the Adenauer years. Actually, most other Germans remember this era as a pleasant one, filled with optimism and opportunity. They remember it that way because it *was* filled with optimism and opportunity, but also because, unlike those born after 1939, say, they could remember a pre-1945 reality with which to compare it.

The real reasons for the alienation of the German generation of 1968—the 68ers as they are called—has less to do with anything stuffy about the Adenauer era and more to do with what it has in common with youth revolts in other affluent liberal democratic cultures after World War II (though this is not the place to rehearse the literature). Germany is not unique among the non-U.S. cases in that its anti-Vietnam War sentiment was imported and wore very second-handed.¹ It is unique, however, in that the German youth revolt played into a culture in which adult authority figures possessed scant moral capital. It is not that many men and women of the Adenauer-era elite did not deserve to claim such capital; they chose not to claim it, however, for it did not match their contrition and genuine sense of humility as leaders among the nations. Therefore, while in other Western societies authority and tradition pushed back against the excesses of youthful alienation, in Germany student rebels were able to

¹By the by, that there were sociologically similar movements outside the United States, in countries whose armies were not fighting in Vietnam, proves that the war cannot by itself explain the youth “revolt” in the United States, but that is a subject for a different essay.

seize virtually an entire culture as if walking through an open door. The consequences of their subsequent Long March through the institutions have gone far to define the country ever since.

Gerhard Schröder insists that he was never really part of the “movement” because it was “too theoretical” for him. He nonetheless made common cause with the extreme left-wing faction of the Young Socialists in order to be elected the leader of the SPD’s youth movement. Once he had attained that position, he turned against his hardcore Marxist allies. Yet Schröder was no mere opportunist. He is representative of the post-modern wing of the 68er movement, the valueless “Me” faction, which is a product of a very peculiar process of cross-fertilization of Euro-American ideas. In this case it concerns existentialism. The notion that existence is always particular and individual—always *my* existence, *your* existence, *his* existence—was introduced into the United States by European refugees before World War II. It was then vulgarized and repackaged by American mass culture into a “me first” worldview and then exported back to Europe, where it became systematized. An anecdote from Schröder’s biography illustrates this famously. One day he stood outside the chancellery in Bonn, rattling at its steel fence and exclaiming, *Ich will hier ’rein* (“I want to get in here”). In other words, no particular political vision but raw egotism motivated his reach for the top job: He just wanted to be chancellor.

But one man’s career does not a movement’s impact make. Before we can appreciate how the 68er phenomenon helped determine the outcome of the recent German election, we must look at its impact on Germany’s educational institutions, its media and consequent cultural self-image, and its attitudes toward the United States.

EDUCATION

IT WAS Herbert Marcuse (1898–1979), the German-American social philosopher, who borrowed and adapted the Long March metaphor from the Maoists. Marcuse’s Marxist-Freudian analyses of 20th-century Western society, which he deemed unfree and repressive, helped to inspire the student rebellion in Europe and America. He did not support the rebels’ street violence under the clarion call, “*Macht kaputt, was euch kaputt macht*” (“Destroy what is destroying you”), but he did advocate “resistance to the point of subversion.” His idea of the Long March was to patiently infiltrate the institutions of society—the parties, the churches, the unions, the media and especially the educational system, all of which he urged students to radicalize.

In 1972, the leaders of what was then called the Extra-Parliamentary Opposition did exactly that—with frightening efficiency. Except for fringe groups, the rebels moved gradually from the street to respectable offices, parsonages and especially the schools, where they succeeded perhaps more thoroughly than in any other area. Wolfram Weimer, editor-in-chief of *Die Welt*, has described how this happened:

They came in purple *Latzhosen* [workman’s overalls that were then in fashion among left-wingers] . . . moved the tables together in the classrooms for group discussions, introduced *Duzen* [teachers and students addressing each other in the informal *Du*, rather than the formal *Sie*] and took leave of achievement. Suddenly, debating problems took precedence over learning, Brecht banished Goethe, the critique of capitalism replaced Kant. Geography mutated to Third-World-Workshops, Religion was reduced to run-of-the mill ethical reflections.²

²Weimer, “Die Früchte der Siebziger”, *Die Welt*, June 6, 2002.

The *kleines rotes Schülerbuch* ("little red students' book") made the rounds urging the young to stop learning, lest their knowledge be exploited later by "the system." They were also discouraged from attending sports classes because their fit bodies would only be subjugated. In varying degrees, the universities were collectivized and stripped of their traditions. Graduation ceremonies and academic robes were abolished, true to the 68er slogan, "*Muff von tausend Jahren unter den Talaren*": the thousand year-old stale odor under these robes had to be aired. Graduates were told, without a scintilla of pomp or circumstance, when and where to pick up their diplomas. That is, if students graduated at all. "*Im wievielten Semester protestierst Du?*" (How many semesters have you been protesting?), people used to quip. (A few years ago, the record holder, a Berliner, had been enrolled for 58 semesters.)

Some universities were worse than others, of course. The worst was in the city-state of Bremen, where students demanded full equality with instructors and insisted on collective, rather than individual, examinations. Twenty would produce one joint thesis. It became so bad that local industries refused to employ Bremen graduates and law firms in other states would not take interns from that university because they lacked both knowledge and the will to work.

The high schools deteriorated, as well. In much of the country, the venerable *Gymnasium* vanished. Once the pillar of Germany's globally admired education system, it was now deemed elitist and replaced by egalitarian comprehensive schools that no longer challenged students. So steep was the decline that for a long time French universities would not recognize the *Abitur* (exit exam) of many German states as the equivalent of France's *baccalauréat*.

With the fullness of time, the 68ers' Long March through the schools has created nothing less than a national disaster in education—the *Bildungsnotstand* as it is known in Germany. A recent OECD survey of the knowledge and skills of 15-year-olds in the 32 principal industrialized countries bore devastating news for Germany. The study, called Program for International Student Assessment, or PISA 2000, ranked Germany near the top of the bottom third, well below Britain, France and the United States. In "reading competence", German teens came in 22nd. Ten percent were unable to understand a text, 13 percent could read a text but not evaluate it; 40 percent did not read for the joy of it. In mathematics and science the Germans took 21st place. One quarter did so badly in mathematics that the examiners concluded that they could not make it even in vocational careers.

This sad story of educational decline and fall has earned Germany much *Schadenfreude*. But Germany's neighbors would do well not to rejoice; they had better start worrying. The economic powerhouse of Europe overrun by ignoramuses spells more potential trouble for the continent than a haughty nation full of know-it-alls. Rightly, German industry is sounding the alarm; and its search for "offshore" production facilities is evidence of its assessment of German education. Yet a majority of the German electorate still seems unaware of the peril; otherwise, it would not have voted for the parties responsible for this misery, for it is chiefly in the traditionally socialist-governed states that the school systems are most rotten. States run by the Christian Democrats have fared better: Bavaria and neighboring Baden-Württemberg; and remarkably, Saxony in the former East Germany scored best in the PISA survey.

MEDIA

IT WAS NOT long, too, before the miseducated 68ers made their way into, and seized much of, Germany's media. Since the early 1970s, they have from that perch become vigorous culture-brokers and image-makers, running public radio and television and glossy magazines such as *Der Stern* and *Der Spiegel*—all of them with a sharp left-wing bias. Of course, they are to some extent balanced by newspapers such as the venerable *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, the publications of the Axel Springer group, the news magazine *Focus*, and many excellent regional dailies. But these cannot fully offset the constant barrage of anti-American, anti-Western, anti-Christian and anti-traditional innuendoes, sniggers and assertions to which the German television viewers have been subjected for decades—especially by talk shows, to which the viewing public seems addicted. As a result, U.S. visitors to this traditionally pro-American country often experience sudden and unaccounted hostility. Thus did three immigration officers at a German airport recently inform an astonished U.S. national with a German family name how much they disapproved of his choice of citizenship.³

The 68er influence in the media had a direct bearing on the election results. If Schröder's anti-Bush campaign resonated with German voters, it was doubtless due in part to media coverage and discussion of September 11 and the war on terrorism. From the start, much of German radio and television described air operations over Afghanistan not as a surgical intervention but as *Vergeltungsschläge*, acts of reprisal, or even *Flächenbombardements*, carpet bombing, terms evoking World War II memories. Rudolf Augstein, founder and publisher of *Der Spiegel*, told his readers:

The Americans have bombed a starving country to the ground. Their plans to combat terrorism are adventurous. Germany must rethink its relationship with the United States.⁴

Germany evidently followed Augstein's advice, which included a reminder of Harry Truman's "war crime", as he termed it: the nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945.

The most influential German media images are, like the Chancellor's existentialism, products of the aforementioned process of Euro-American cross-fertilization. After the war, the German press patterned itself closely after American journalism, which separated news reporting from opinion. But in the 1960s, when American publications switched to a more subjective "new journalism", their German counterparts quickly followed suit. One recent example of how American "new journalism" has influenced European public opinion was a full-page *New York Times* feature about George W. Bush's alleged underperformance in college. The European media imported this story and systematized it; ever since, virtually all Europeans who fancy themselves thoughtful believe that Bush is just plain stupid, and a reckless cowboy to boot—which is exactly how *Der Spiegel* often caricatures him.

In no area, however, does the power of the 68ers' pre-eminence in the media express itself more forcefully than in its ability to promote that generation's own moral credentials. The now-graying 68ers ceaselessly advertise themselves in German media culture products as the *avant-garde* generation that advanced democracy in

³Hans-Ulrich Gumbrecht, "Wie man den Frieden verkauft oder Die Diffamierung Amerikas", *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, October 4, 2002.

⁴Augstein, "Abenteurer und Strategen", *Spiegel* (online), November 19, 2001.

Germany and finally forced the nation to face up to its Nazi past. This myth, which has been imported by much of the American academy and media, has no basis whatsoever in fact. There is irony, too, in the fact that the 68ers singled out conservative newspaper publisher Axel Springer for their wrath and, indeed, terrorist attacks. Springer, well before 1968, had probably done more vicarious penance for Germany's mass slaughter of the Jews than any other individual. "Expropriate Springer!", they chanted; yet it was Springer who made his journalists sign a list of "essentials" committing them to reconciliation between Germans and Jews, and it was Springer who poured a fortune into Israel.

Gerd Koenen, once one of the movement's top theorists, acknowledges the shallowness of the 68ers' reckoning with German history. When Palestinian terrorists murdered the Israeli team during the 1972 Olympics in Munich, Ulrike Meinhof remarked that Israel was now shedding "crocodile tears" while "it burns its sportsmen just as the Nazis burned the Jews—fuel for the imperialist policies of extermination."⁵ Meinhof, co-leader of the terrorist gang that was the most lethal brood of the 1968 vintage, went on to call Defense Minister Moshe Dayan "Israel's Himmler." Being "blessed by her late birth", to paraphrase Helmut Kohl, she felt at liberty to concoct this toxic cocktail of words mixing anti-imperialism, anti-Zionism and unabashed anti-Semitism.

To my generation of Germans—those too young to have been implicated in Nazi crimes but old enough to have witnessed Germany's destruction, disgrace and then the monumental feat of its reconstruction—the 68ers' claim of being the first to have redeemed their country is preposterous. When they were still in elementary school (or in diapers), we learned from our teachers and pastors, and from reading the papers, what had happened in Auschwitz.

We challenged our parents' generation even as we appreciated their pain. We knew the *Trümmerfrauen* who cleared rubble while their husbands or brothers were still in POW camps or, more likely, distant war graves; we knew them not just from photographs but because they were our grandmothers, mothers, aunts and neighbors. It was our generation of pre-68ers, too, that first went to Coventry to help rebuild a cathedral bombed by Göring's *Luftwaffe*, that first flocked to Israel to work on *kibbutzim*, that financed the first chunks of restitution payments made to Israel and victims of the Nazi regime worldwide—all while the soon-to-be 68ers enjoyed a cozy adolescence.

But none of this matters anymore. The media message is unrelenting: the 68ers are the heroes, and all their forbears, like the Adenauer era against which they "arose", are dull, compromised and fettered by their own historical "complexes." One of those complexes is their quaint respect for the United States of America.

ANTI-AMERICANISM

CONTEMPORARY German anti-Americanism can only be understood in the light of the 68er experience, for the reigning 68ers have a peculiarly inverted love-hate relationship with America. Neither they nor the country are anti-American in a typical way; when pollsters ask more or less straightforward questions about the United States, nearly three-quarters of all Germans claim to be pro-American. But what exactly do they mean by that? It depends who is being asked.

This early anti-Americanism of the 68ers struck us elders as a form of infantile petulance: "Love me because I am

⁵Koenen, *Das rote Jahrzehnt, Unsere kleine Kulturrevolution* (Cologne: Kiepenhauer und Witsch, 2001).

naughty." But it was really less and more than that; at any rate, it was not ordinary anti-Americanism by any means. Koenen describes the 68ers' attitudes toward America as an internal paradox: anti-Americans swinging to British and American pop music like "Street Fightin' Man", "Route 66" and "Hotel California." At the inception of their revolutionary epoch, they used American jargon, dressed like American hippies and chanted "Ho-Ho-Ho-Chi Minh" as if they were marching through Berkeley, waving the VC flag and smoking pot like their American contemporaries. They literally endeavored, incompetently, to imitate American protestors. What was the slogan of the Black Power movement? "Burn, baby, burn." What did Andreas Baader, Meinhof's partner in terror, scream in garbled English after burning down a Frankfurt department store, allegedly to avenge the Vietcong? "Burn, warehouse, burn." (Baader, a confused man in more ways than one, mistook *Lagerhalle* for *Warenhaus*, "warehouse" for "department store.")

In their own minds, the 68ers weren't anti-American at all. Rather, they were pro-anti-American Americans. In other words, the Americans the 68ers admired were self-hating Americans, whom they saw as the ultra-Atlantic counterpart of self-hating Germans. This is perfectly logical when one thinks it through. The 68ers were raised with extremely ambiguous, if not plainly negative, conceptions of German nationalism and all the symbols associated with it. Little wonder, then, that they were alienated from the postwar German state, which, however demur and responsible it was, could not help but press German interests. It follows that the protector and mentor of this state, namely the political establishment in the United States, was a candidate for alienation by association. Finally, to complete the psychological circle, the enemies of that

establishment—anti-U.S. Americans—had to be the friends of the 68ers. And since they could not love themselves—they, too, were Germans, after all—the American counterculture was, in effect, the last model standing.

Thus did the German 68ers strive to earn brownie points with U.S. progressives. (They have continued to do so ever since—at least until September 11, 2001, when other outsiders established altogether new parameters of anti-Americanism.) Koenen shows how the 68ers perversely flexed their muscles by showing off their "moral negative capital", meaning the good fortune of having been born after Germany's descent into infamy. Armed with "militant innocence", they became the vanguard in the global struggle against alleged "U.S. imperialism" in Nicaragua and southern Africa. They told the world: We were so bad, but look how wonderfully, radically good we are now. And for a long time, it worked. Alongside befuddled U.S. mainline clerics and social science professors on sabbatical, they hacked sugar cane in "oppressed" nations.

Germany's 68ers, some of them anyway, got at least a dim sense that things changed last September 11. Much of the U.S. political counterculture that they admired and imitated turned cautiously patriotic in the face of a clear and present danger, not to speak of an atrocity. But the German 68ers found it very hard to shirk off a lifetime of adulation and vicarious heroism. They probably believed right until the German election on September 22 that their pro-anti-American Americanism still made sense, and would continue to work in German politics. Maybe they were right. Only a few weeks before Justice Minister Herta and Paul Däubler-Gmelin compared Bush with Hitler, an American churchman did the same at a conference on the war on terrorism sponsored by the World Council of Churches in Chevy Chase, Maryland.

The difference was that, unlike perhaps two years ago, that churchman is now viewed as a crackpot in the United States, whereas Däubler-Gmelin, a senior official of an important ally, was merely ruled impolitic, “out of order”, so to speak, rather than out of line.

Protestant Deformation and Chiliast Fantasy

IT IS NOT TOO much to say, then, that a red thread connects Germany’s educational emergency, its media culture, the self-image of its leadership class and the knee-jerk anti-Bush sentiment to which Schröder appealed in his recent campaign. But the thread does not end there; it leads also to another bastion of social authority in any society: its religious institutions.

The 68ers’ Long March has thoroughly altered Germany’s Protestant territorial churches, to which 26.6 million Germans belong, compared with 26.8 million Catholics. Chiefly as a result of the left-wing drift of their church leadership, German Protestants, once in the majority, have now become a minority group.

Nowhere is Protestantism’s decline more noticeable than in Hamburg, once a bastion of staunch Lutheranism and now the model of ecclesiological postmodernity. For the last ten years, Maria Jepsen, the first female bishop in world Lutheranism, has headed the Hamburg church. Her tenure has been marked by a two-page interview placed above an advertisement for sadomasochistic paraphernalia in a magazine for homosexuals, and by her preface to a tome entitled, *Göttlich lesbisch* (“Divinely Lesbian”). Until recently, the staff of one prominent downtown church would take bets as to how long it would take their bishop, who is married, to get her favorite topic, homosexuality, into her sermons. (The loser had to buy a round of champagne.) At one point too, Jepsen, a

self-described “soft feminist”, suggested replacing the cross as the Christian symbol in Lutheran churches with a crèche because this would be much “nicer.” Not surprisingly, during Jepsen’s first ten years in office, the Hamburg church shrank faster than any other in Germany. It lost a full third of its membership and is now down to 587,000, a minority in a city in which almost everybody used to be Lutheran after World War II. Even so, the synod of her region has just re-elected her to another ten-year term.

In a way, Ms. Jepsen is a caricature of the postmodern German church, whose pronouncements are often indistinguishable from those of the Social Democrats and the Greens. Despite figures like Jepsen, Germany still produces brilliant theologians; names such as Wolfhart Pannenberg, Eberhard Jüngel and Michael Welker come to mind. And there are still faithful pastors and powerful preachers whose churches usually make up the few that are still well attended on Sundays. Nevertheless, the decline of much of German Protestantism to an anthropocentric, politically-correct shadow of its former self not only mirrors the decline of other institutions since the Long March commenced, it also parallels the diminution of America’s mainline churches—and for good reason. Religion is yet another field where Germany and the United States constantly re-infect each other with wayward theologoumena, albeit sometimes via long detours. The mad genius of Friedrich Nietzsche furnishes a case in point.

Nietzsche’s pronouncement that “God is dead” took almost a century to root itself in American theology, well after the Germans had discarded it. But thanks to the American knack for reducing lofty concepts to user-friendly formulae, this concept, too, was repackaged for global—and, of course, German—consumption. “When I attended Princeton Seminary in the early 1970s, the topic in homiletics was, ‘What

do you now preach on Easter Sunday?\"", the Rev. Fred R. Anderson, senior pastor of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church in Manhattan, told me. What indeed, if God was dead and therefore could not have raised Christ from the dead? The Germans then picked this up in an odd way. Not that a whole new "God is dead" school emerged; rather, much of the German church since the Long March has resolved the "What do you now preach on Easter Sunday?" issue by proclaiming the social gospel, which is essentially an import from the United States. Horst-Klaus Hofmann, a German lay theologian who founded a highly successful ministry that "deprogrammed" tens of thousands of post-1968 student radicals, attributes his church's "blindness in the left eye", especially the refusal to see the inhumanity of Communist regimes, to a similar and much older deficiency in American religion. "We have copied Sherwood Eddy", explained Hofmann. (Before World War II, the theologian Eddy [1873–1963] organized guided tours to the Soviet Union to show Christians from the United States how "progressive" this socialist nation was.) "He overlooked the slaughter of the kulaks", says Hofmann: "Similarly, we have had many church leaders schmoozing with the Communists after 1968."

This discussion of Protestantism deformed in Germany brings us to and links us with an older mode of German utopianism, which has sometimes expressed itself in religious, sometimes in philosophical terms. Germans are still in search of the ideal and final "It"—the answer to "life, the universe and everything", as the late Douglas Adams comically put it—and God help us all if we find one.

A susceptibility to utopian fallacies is, of course, not an exclusively German trait. However, no other Western nation has been more torn between two irreconcilable worldviews—the rational and the millenarian—than this one. The conflict

goes at least as far back as the clash between the 16th-century reformers Martin Luther and Thomas Müntzer. Its roots are theological. It pits Luther's rational approach against chiliast dreams espoused by both the violent social reformer Müntzer and the otherworldly and pacifist Anabaptists. Luther, who dismissed both types as *Schwärmer*, or enthusiasts, saw natural reason as the "empress of all things" in the secular realm, a gift from God to enable man to find his way around this world. Reason tells us that it is not for man to accelerate the *eschaton*, the return of Christ and the beginning of his millennium. The chiliast, on the other hand—the term is rooted in the Greek word *chilioi*, meaning one thousand—expects the union of the promised millennium with the here and now. In theological parlance, the chiliast endeavors to immanentize the *eschaton*.

The chiliast's means may be violent, which is why Karl Mannheim saw a "structural link" between 16th-century chiliasm and social revolution.⁶ Or they may be anti-violent, in the form of a radical drive for peace that requires an unconditional withdrawal from the world. Müntzer was a violent chiliast who believed he was doing God's work. His modern heirs, the Communists and the National Socialists, were godless but acknowledged their debt to him. Friedrich Engels paid homage to Müntzer's visions.⁷ So did Alfred Rosenberg, Nazism's principal ideologue, in his vile work, *Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts*.⁸ Latter-day left-wingers in both East and West Germany did the

⁶Karl Mannheim, *Ideologie und Utopie* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1985), p. 184.

⁷Friedrich Engels, *The German Revolutions* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1963), p. 46.

⁸Discussed in Joachim Fest, *Der zerstörte Traum, Vom Ende des utopischen Zeitalters* (Frankfurt: Siedler, 1991), p. 63.

same; in the 1970s, several Protestant *kindergartens* in West Germany were named after Müntzer.

As a delayed consequence of the 68ers' Long March, today's Germany is once again in danger of slipping into a chiliast mode, albeit one of the non-violent variety. It is understandable that, after the longest period of peace and prosperity in their entire history, the Germans prefer to cling to their blessed status for just a little while longer. Yet their current utopian *Schwärmerei* is particularly bizarre; after all, a paradise whose inmates are chiefly preoccupied with wondering where to spend their next six-week vacation must by definition be very strange.

“NOT IDEAS but the murkier depths of the soul” motivated Müntzer's movement, Mannheim wrote. The same goes for soft chiliasm. Many Germans

today simply cannot reconcile their amazing good fortune—peace, prosperity, democracy, reunification and Europafication, too—with the extremely low national self-esteem to which they have been educated and inured. God seems to have blessed them despite themselves, but half a century after the *Götterdämmerung* most cannot summon the words with which to give thanks, because anything like the admission of a real belief in God departed with the Nuremberg judges. No wonder their depths are murky.

Schröder catered to these murky depths and won. By directing his country to a perilous *Sonderweg*, however, he has reopened the portfolio of Germany's past, and clouded its future. Is that future to be one of a softly smothering European Union—one that will transcend the national idea and finally link Germany with the rest of normal humanity—or will the modern German chiliasts find their “It”? *Sonderweg*, indeed. □

Party in a Madhouse

Following the terrorist attacks in the United States a wave of pacifist excitement swept through Germany. It was driven by two ideas: what did the Western world do to the perpetrators so that they saw reason to become as nasty as they did? And: what do we have to do so they spare us in the future? Retribution and, worse even, revenge would be ruled out; instead the dialogue between the cultures should be intensified. Some people demanded “emergency measures” to fight the root causes of terrorism, which they thought to be poverty and hunger in the third world. . . .

It seemed to be a party in a madhouse . . . and the motto of the celebration was: “No war, nowhere.” There has never been such a thing as a just war, one was to hear, a war would not solve a single problem, but rather create more suffering and injustice. . . .

Any condemnation of the terror attacks against America came with a “but”: But isn't it true that the victims share some of the guilt? Wasn't it American policy that created this type of reaction? Didn't the Americans support the military regime in Chile? And boycott the Kyoto accord? And contaminate the whole world with hamburgers? Of course, everybody was opposed to terrorism, but even more to hunting down terrorists because that would only encourage them to hit yet again. For that reason it was important to demonstrate a certain amount of understanding for the perpetrators who had acted in despair about the fate of the globe. The good Germans capitulated preventively in order not to be attacked themselves. This was their lesson from history.

—Henryk Broder, *Kein Krieg, nirgends: Die Deutschen und der Terror* (Berlin: Verlag, 2002), translated by Thomas Kleine-Brockhoff

Normative Shift

Coral Bell

THE POPE's apologies to Muslims for the sins of 12th-century Crusaders, the crises over Kosovo and East Timor, the prosecution of Augusto Pinochet, the rows in the International Whaling Commission, the harangues of Slobodan Milosevic from his dock at The Hague, the belated compensation to the victims of Nazism—all these phenomena are improbably connected by a single invisible thread: normative shift. In the Western world of the last few decades, the phenomenon of normative shift—by which I mean simply the social process of changing domestic or international rules about what is deemed acceptable or unacceptable behavior—has been a factor in decisions ranging right up to military action, and even the form such action has taken. One special case, normative conflict between the West and the Islamic world, has deeper roots—at least 300 if not 1,300 years deeper. But that conflict, too, has been sharpened to a murderous point by recent changes in Western norms, even so domestic and seemingly marginal a change as the recruitment of women to combat forces.

How, then, to characterize normative

shift? Why does it occur, and what factors account for its particular direction? How have the changes flowing from it been manifest in recent international crises? What is the relationship of changing norms to the structure of the international system, and what of the future? It is with these questions that this essay is concerned.

Norms, Laws and Consequences

LAWYERS TEND to equate norms with laws, moralists equate them with ethical standards, and religiously-oriented people equate them with the edicts of their respective deities. But the derivation of the word is very down-to-earth: from the Latin for a carpenter's set-square. The set-square tells the carpenter what a right-angle is "expected and required" to be. A social norm defines "expected and required" behavior in a particular society at a particular time. An international norm defines "expected and required" behavior in the society of states. The existence of a norm, at any level, thus does not imply permanence, still less divine edict, even though many norms are presumed to have that status.

Moreover, to get from a norm to a law is no simple matter. "Thou shalt not murder" is a moral norm, but the law is not identical to the norm: for one thing,

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laws always have escape clauses, allowing the state, for example, to engage in murderous behavior in war and sometimes in capital punishment—although the norm on that latter has changed recently in many countries. Understanding the difference between norms and laws is a prerequisite for grasping some recent international changes. Just as Prohibition was a law that never became a norm (“expected and required behavior”) for most Americans, so too, on the international plane, have assorted idealists or liberals or “do-gooders” (according to one’s point of view) promoted numerous UN conventions that have been duly signed and ratified by enough governments for them to have acquired the status of international law. But they have not necessarily become international *norms*, because governments have not seriously “expected and required” themselves and each other to abide by most of them—at least not until very recently.

The case of Augusto Pinochet is instructive here. Until the British Law Lords decided otherwise in 1998, almost everyone believed that the old norm of “sovereign immunity” protected him from prosecution for the actions of his minions in Chile after the 1973 coup. The British government itself had believed so only a few weeks earlier, providing him with the usual courtesies for a former head of state when he arrived. But it then suddenly arrested him when the Law Lords decided that the UN Convention against torture, ratified by Britain in 1988, trumped the old norm. Despite the final British decision to release the general on health grounds, and despite the Chilean government’s protests at the time that Britain’s behavior infringed upon Chilean sovereignty, that judgment became a precedent which, ironically enough, enabled the Chilean government itself to arrest Pinochet a few months after his return to Santiago.

The Pinochet incident stands as illustration of the fact that a confluence of developments that reached “critical mass” only in the last decade of the 20th century has induced a rapid shift from one more or less logically inclusive set of international norms to another. Note that I do not say that this shift is from old norms to new, for some of those norms now most vital to understanding world politics date back to the just war doctrine of the 5th century, and are to be found in Hugo Grotius. The shift is rather from “realist/nationalist” norms to alternatives that may in part be called “cosmopolitan” (as opposed to “internationalist”). But the shift toward cosmopolitan norms, which we will examine below, though rapid, is tentative and incomplete because it is related both to technologies and power structures that are still evolving. It may never be universal, and it is still potentially reversible.

A domestic analogy—but as we shall see, not just an analogy—may again be helpful in conveying the speed of change. Until the 1960s, most people in Western societies accepted traditional norms concerning relations between men and women. Men were expected to be the primary breadwinners, women were expected to stay home and raise children, most babies were expected to be born in wedlock, and homosexual relations were expected to be carefully concealed, being indeed illegal in many societies. Those were, in effect, the mainstream norms of the time; not everyone liked them, but mostly people went along without seriously questioning the existing order of things. In a mere ten years or so, starting from the late 1960s, all that changed (in Western societies) rather dramatically, giving us new norms that most Westerners now accept. Much of what once was “expected and required”, like marriage, has become all but optional; some of what was “expected and required”, concerning

homosexual behavior in particular, has witnessed a virtual normative reversal.

How shall we account for such a profound normative shift, affecting the most basic social sinews of Western societies (though *not* of most others)? A few factors, in their mutual interaction, are obvious: the coming of age of a very large cohort of young people; the alienation of that group from traditional authority structures and norms, accelerated and spread partly because of the Vietnam War; the long upturn in prosperity; the rapid expansion of higher education; the influence of feminist doctrines. Most important, probably, was a single technological factor: the advent of the contraceptive pill. Without reliable means of controlling how many children they would have and when, women's surge into the workplace—on which practically everything else of social normative significance depended—would hardly have been possible. But even allowing for all that, the speed of change still seems a little mysterious. The zeitgeist keeps some of its secrets.

Much the same is true of the somewhat later normative shift in the society of states. Even after the usual suspects have been rounded up for inspection, some mystery remains. But a technological factor seems likely again to prove the most vital of all, and it is one that is being universalized far more easily than the Western domestic norms sketched a moment ago. That factor is information and communications technology in its widest sense, and the reason it is being universalized so rapidly is its essential role in creating an efficient modern economy. Even a government like China's, which is so afraid of alternative social norms that it throws fairly harmless Falun Gong practitioners into dungeons, is neither willing nor effectively able to prevent the spread of computers and mobile phones and e-mail, despite the fact that these devices

have already proved how enormously useful they can be to political activists of every sort. Especially dissidents.

Factors of Change

SO, NORMS change because the way we live changes, and in recent decades, if not the last few centuries, nothing has affected our lives as profoundly as scientific-technical innovation. Normative shift in international politics is not, however, a simple function of technology. The fuller sociological context of these innovations must be examined to make any sense of the matter. When we do, we see that three main factors have been driving normative change in international politics.

First of these in time, but not in importance, has been the institutionalization of diplomacy. That must be dated from 1945 (with 1919 as a "false dawn"), but it has only reached critical mass in the past decade or two. Second, and much more recent, is the end of the Cold War and the advent of the unipolar world, which dates from the collapse of the Soviet Union at the end of 1991. I will return to these two factors in due course, but for now we dwell on the third and most fundamental factor: the information/communications revolution.

One could date this technology-driven transformation from as early as the beginnings of international broadcasting in the 1920s, but it has only reached critical mass in the mid-1990s with the near-universalization of the Internet. This will prove the most significant of the three factors because of its role in creating and empowering a *cosmopolitan* as well as an *international* civil society. The essential distinction between the two is one of focus. Internationalism seeks greater cooperation among peoples, but it focuses on and reinforces the concept of the nation—or, more precisely, the sovereign

state as represented by its government—as the central player in world politics. Cosmopolitanism, by contrast, sees the individual as a citizen of “the universal city”—that is, of the single worldwide community of humankind, all of whose members are deemed to be entitled to equal rights independent of what their existing governments are prepared to allow them. It is thus subversive of state authority in a way that internationalism is not.

The “battle of Seattle” in 1999, and successor episodes since, can to some degree be seen as the two concepts in collision. Most of those seeking to disrupt the meetings of the WTO and other international organizations may be economic or cultural nationalists, angry at the loss of jobs or the intrusion into their societies of American cultural norms. But others believe (mistakenly) that the WTO and other international organizations promote only the interests of rich nations to the disadvantage of the majority of humankind. Though probably not a majority of the activists, the techniques they use and the agendas they promote are inherently cosmopolitan: human rights must be defended in California as well as in China; forests must be cherished in Indonesia as well as Oregon; land mines must be banned for the sake of humanity as a whole, even if they deter war in Korea. The relevant normative focus in cosmopolitan decision-making is *not* the interest of the nation, the state or the government, but the supposed general well-being of the world’s people.

The explosive worldwide growth of information and communication technologies, especially the Internet, has provided an ideal context for the activists who run such groups. It is easier and cheaper to set up a “demo” now than ever before. And the media are in a sort of (mostly unwitting) symbiotic relationship with the advocacy NGOs. They need sto-

ries even more than the activists need publicity. Few things provide better television pictures than a good rowdy protest—except for falling towers, which leads us to yet another technological development that is deeply unsettling to the traditional normative environment.

Those nightmare images of the 9/11 attack on New York remind us that a non-state actor, a terrorist group, can now inflict savage trauma on the richest and most powerful society in history. Contemporary technologies are the source of that power, and their nature allows, even facilitates, the redistribution of that power from the state to other groupings. Indeed, it may be that such technologies will come soon to rival the information/communications revolution as a factor in normative shift. The two types of technology are clearly already related in an important dynamic: while one sort of technological change is balm to cosmopolitan anti-sovereignty activists, another sort is balm to apocalyptic terrorists. The latter raises a response from the system’s leading state in terms of new doctrines of preventive war and regime change that are themselves normatively novel, and the former then rush to undermine this response by insisting, for example, on conflating the Geneva Conventions, a traditional form of contract law, with the growing corpus of human rights “law.”¹ Cosmopolitan activists and apocalyptic terrorists share few norms in common—the only one, really, being their hostility to the norms of the Westphalian system. But they deploy their technological capacities in ways that are forcing that system to depart from its own fixed convictions and rules.

This does not mean that sovereign

¹See Jeremy Rabkin, “After Guantanamo: The War Over the Geneva Convention”, *The National Interest* (Summer 2002), and related correspondence in this issue.

states will cease being the dominant actors in world politics for the foreseeable future. The point is rather that technological change will probably be an increasingly important factor both in normative shift and in the power relationships between the state and other global forces. This dynamic also helps to explain how norms and the structure of the international political system are related. How can cosmopolitan norms ever become institutionalized if they fly in the face of the nation-state organization of the existing system? The short answer is that they first challenge the norms of that system, which must then react in ways that acknowledge or partially accommodate the cosmopolitan norms that produce the challenge. The dialectic of challenges from the margin affecting core norms is usually so slow a process that we do not even notice it most of the time. Lately, however, as suggested above, the process is moving quite fast, and it is all we can do sometimes to notice anything else.

Vectors of Change

A BRIEF LOOK at the past will make clear how remarkable is the current speed of normative change, and what shape it is taking. For the whole three hundred years from the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 to the UN Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, the normative foundations of the society of states hardly changed at all. An anti-slavery norm was added in the 19th century, a process that took sixty years—from the British legislation abolishing the slave trade in 1806–07 to the end of the American Civil War in 1865. An antiwar norm struggled to emerge in the early 20th century, especially after the horrors of World War I, but it can hardly be said to have established itself even now, considering how many wars go on happening. The most optimistic view that can be sus-

tained on this issue is that the reasons for which war is still regarded as legitimate have been greatly reduced, and that war between genuinely democratic governments (an increasing band) is now very unlikely. An anti-colonialism norm that emerged after World War II is far better established. The overseas empires of the European powers have been wound up, except for a few islands here and there. The great contiguous Russian empire built by the czars and maintained by the Soviet Union has been partially dissolved, and may dissolve still further.

The European Union provides the most dramatic post-World War II example of how normative shift can rapidly effect large structural changes, both economic and political. In 1945, the people, and particularly the intellectuals, of Continental Europe were intensely disillusioned with their respective national states, which had protected them neither from the Great Depression, the rise of fascism and the trauma of conquest and occupation, nor the later depredations of Soviet power. So the norms of nationalism and of the sovereign state (which Europeans had invented and lived with for centuries) were at a sharp discount (with Britain a partial exception). For the past fifty-plus years, this basic normative shift has been the motivating force behind the changes in European political and economic structures. The construction of Europe has not replaced nationalism, but it has diverted the emotional drives behind nationalism into different channels, increasing feelings of identification both with the larger context, Europe, and (by reaction) also with the smaller, older polities like Scotland, Wales, Corsica, Brittany, Lombardy, Catalonia and the Basque country. Over the same fifty years, the new economic and political structures centered in Brussels have increasingly sought and acquired power to enforce new norms—some as comically trivial as

the “expected and required” ingredients of a sausage or the allowable degree of curvature in a cucumber, but some as important as the prohibition of capital punishment. That process remains ongoing, and while no one can be sure of what the final shape and extent of Europe will be, it is already clear that it will have great economic clout, and probably many areas of normative difference with the United States.

Other notable normative shifts of the post-World War II years have concerned environmental issues and arms control restrictions on both weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons. Efforts to restrict what governments can do (or permit to be done) to the environment, and efforts to restrict what weapons they can develop and deploy, no doubt both erode sovereignty around the edges. But what strikes to the heart of normative shift in international relations are the changes defining what governments can do *to their own people*. This emerging normative shift is not just postwar, but post-Cold War in its essence, and this cannot be merely a coincidence. Indeed, four of the five main crises of the 1990s—the Gulf, Bosnia, Kosovo and East Timor—have helped to define those changes, and the fifth, Chechnya, has indicated their limitations. We need now to examine these cases in brief, for they lie on the very frontier of a rapidly changing international normative environment.

Norms and Crisis Management

THE GULF crisis and war of 1990–91 was primarily interest-driven rather than norm-driven: that is, the U.S. “coalition of the willing” that mounted hostilities against Ba’athi Iraq was primarily motivated by the prudential concern of the individual governments for their respective national interests, notably with regard to energy

resources. Nevertheless, the operation did assert two important norms: that aggression should not be allowed to prosper, and that small sovereignties were not to be expunged by force. Of course, as international ideals those concepts had been frequently given pious official endorsement at least since 1919, so they were not new. But their enforcement in 1991 in effect turned ideals into norms, into “expected and required behavior.”

Then came Bosnia. Despite almost four years of blunders and false starts, that crisis confirmed those norms and added another: that states are not to expand their territories by armed force, even if most of the people in the disputed area favor the takeover. The Serbs in Republika Srpska may all have preferred union with Serbia, but they were not allowed to make that choice of self-determination at the territorial expense of Bosnia. A perceived parallel with the Sudeten Germans in Czechoslovakia in 1938–39 perhaps haunted the negotiators. The clash between the self-determination norm (which was already quite strong in 1918, but has been reinforced by events in Bosnia, Kosovo and East Timor) and an anti-secession norm (which had perhaps its strongest affirmation in the American Civil War, and is still backed by materialist norms as well as vested interests) in many countries is clear, and likely to lie at the heart of many future conflicts, as in Chechnya.

Kosovo and East Timor, unlike the Gulf War (and to a greater degree than Bosnia) may be defined as crises in which outside intervention was norm-driven rather than interest-driven. Both are small, resource-poor provinces. Aside from their immediate neighbors, no outside power had much of a stake, either economically or strategically, in their future governance. Nor were any other plausible outside national interests at stake, except the indirect long-term bene-

fit supposed to accrue to every member of the society of states from living in a system in which norms are effective because they are observed. And they are observed because they have (when occasion has demanded) been enforced.

The norm asserted in both cases was not just or mainly that of self-determination, but rather that minorities, even if troublesome, are not to be massacred, expelled or deprived of their human rights as spelled out in the Geneva Conventions of 1948. If future governments have to take that norm seriously, it will plant quite a land mine in the society of states, one that might shatter several of its members into smaller pieces quite irrespective of claims to self-determination. A great many countries have dissident provinces that central authorities repress to one degree or another. Some Third World countries are a mosaic of separate (and potentially separatist) ethnic groups, just as Tito's Yugoslavia was. Undoubtedly, the whole sequence of recent crises from Macedonia to East Timor has taught political activists in such provinces to think more hopefully about autonomy or even sovereignty, and how it might be secured. The fact that the interventions in Kosovo and East Timor were norm-driven rather than interest-driven is even more encouraging (from their point of view) than the other crises. This is because norms can be claimed "universal" and not subject to compromise, whereas interests are usually local and eminently negotiable. To universalize the East Timor norm, however, would mean many new sovereignties, most of them unstable and not economically viable.

That consideration brings us sharply up against an uncomfortable but unavoidable question: Why only Kosovo and East Timor? Why not Chechnya or Tibet, or southern Sudan or Rwanda, or a host of other recent struggles, many of which have evinced worse humanitarian conse-

quences than those that provoked the two interventions of 1999? In the cases of Chechnya and Tibet, the obvious reasons are those of strategic prudence and great power diplomacy. But there is also the matter of "security regionalization", which returns us, as promised, to the institutionalization of diplomacy.

Both Kosovo and East Timor were regional crises that evoked primarily regional responses, but the regional circumstances were significantly distinct in the two cases. In the case of Kosovo there already existed a large, powerful and long-established military coalition, NATO, specifically dedicated to the security of Europe. That is not true of the Asia-Pacific or for any other part of the world. For East Timor, a security force had to be improvised in a hurry, for none of the three organizations interested in Southeast Asia (ASEAN, APEC and ARF²) was at all militarily-oriented, still less capable of actual military initiative. It was only because Australia had capable forces and bases nearby that rapid action was possible. U.S. policymakers, in turn, put sufficient diplomatic pressure on Jakarta to induce President Habibie (and perhaps even more importantly, General Wiranto) to pull out Indonesian troops so that Australian forces could enter a "permissive environment."

What is significant here is that a form of transregional international action substituted for the absence of a diplomatically institutionalized regional security structure. This was quite remarkable, not least because it represented the maturation of an idea suggested in the earliest days of the League of Nations in 1919. It was called the "hue and cry" concept, the assumption being that if the society of states made enough of an outcry about

²Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation and the ASEAN Regional Forum.

some delinquent government policy, the targeted government would lose its nerve and abandon the denounced line of action. In effect, international public opinion would substitute for armed force. It did not work against Japan on Manchuria (1931) or against Italy on Ethiopia (1936) or against Germany on Czechoslovakia (1938), so the concept was abandoned by all but the most starry-eyed of liberals. But those crises occurred in a multipolar world, and a world in which the communications revolution was still at an embryonic stage. In the contemporary "internetted", media-dominated, globalized and unipolar world, it may be that the moment of truth for that strategy has finally arrived.

But only in some cases. It has not been sufficient in cases such as the Sudan and Rwanda, and it would not have worked on the hard-shelled government of old Communist apparatchiks in Belgrade. For that, another old theory found its moment of truth: the airpower concept first propounded by Giulio Douhet in the 1920s. The central proposition of his theory was that to modify the will of the chief adversary decision-maker, the best strategy was to destroy the fixed assets that he valued and his society needed: power stations, bridges, air-defense systems and so on. When the level of destruction reached a point that threatened his own power base, the adversary leader would make a deal. That seems a fair approximation of the process by which Milosevic was induced to withdraw his troops from Kosovo in early June 1999, thus allowing the NATO troops to enter "a permissive environment."

Thus we have two neatly contrasted political situations responding to two different crisis-management techniques: the weak government structure (or non-structure) in Jakarta yielding to the "hue and cry" concept in September/October 1999, and the tough-minded, tightly controlled

authoritarian structure in Belgrade yielding to airpower doctrine in June 1999. In both cases the concept was one invented about eighty years earlier *but not technologically or politically feasible, on the evidence, until the end of the century*. I stress this point because of what it indicates about the 21st century. Imagination leaps forward: the means to effect what has been imagined limps slowly after it, but it usually does arrive in time. The crucial diplomatic necessity is to recognize that moment.

Both crises also reinforce the point that the institutionalization of diplomacy, especially in its regional form, gives the governments which have created those institutions a stake in their survival and prestige. Almost as important, the frequent meetings involved give the decision-makers a sense of collegiality, and a tendency to bandwagon. NATO's power and prestige are so important to all its members that even Greece, which abhorred the attack on its fellow Orthodox ally, Serbia, played a vital role in that campaign by use of its port in Thessaloniki. In the East Timor case, even Malaysia, which abhorred the pressure put on the largest Islamic power (Indonesia), and which has often been at odds with Australian prime ministers, went along, if reluctantly.

By contrast, in those military and humanitarian crises where regional organization is absent, inadequate or underdeveloped, *and* where no Timor-like *ad hoc* international substitute is at hand (Sudan, Algeria, Sri Lanka, Somalia, Congo, Sierra Leone, Rwanda and others, especially in Africa), nothing effective tends to get done. By its very nature, the UN is incapable of putting together rapidly an effective military force: too many decision-makers have to be consulted or persuaded. Besides, even though there is a cosmopolitan tendency in the current normative shift, peoples who are culturally

or geographically close tend to get the largest share of any society's attention. So regionalism is almost inevitably a major factor in the prospects for effective action, particularly so in those regions in which the United States has no vital national interests engaged.

In the case of the 1990s' fifth military crisis, Chechnya, the rights of minorities had to be weighed against the interests of the world as a whole in stable relations between Moscow and the West. The discontent of the Chechens with their incorporation into the Russian Federation is well justified. The Caucasus was a contested 19th-century acquisition by the Czarist Empire, and the Chechens claim never to have stopped fighting it. Stalin brutally deported them *en masse* to Central Asia during World War II, so they have every reason to resent and resist Russian control. But an outside military intervention on their behalf, even if it were possible, would violate two ancient norms of just war doctrine, prudence and proportionality; the chances of success would be slight, and the danger to world peace would vastly outweigh any good that might be done. The same is true with regard to Tibet and its situation *vis-à-vis* China.

In short, attempts to enforce normative change, however sincere, still have to take account of power relationships, thus inevitably attracting charges of hypocrisy. New norms cannot, or at any rate do not, override structural realities except perhaps with time, often protracted time. Moreover, the trajectory of normative development can stall (or even be reversed as, for example, when Nazi norms replaced those of Weimar). Several trans-sovereignty norms were hopefully asserted before World War II—we remember, do we not, the Kellogg-Briand Pact and Peace Pledge ballots?—but the rise of totalitarianism forced states and publics alike to hold on to traditional

norms. There can be little doubt that the post-Cold War international security environment is what has enabled the rapid advance of the cosmopolitan normative agenda. We live in a world in which war among the great powers is highly unlikely—less likely, perhaps, than at anytime since the Treaty of Westphalia. But clearly, a major deterioration of the contemporary security environment—caused, say, by a nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan—could set back the advance of cosmopolitan norms considerably. After all, it is generally true, as Josef Joffe has written, that international organization thrives because there is peace, not the other way around.

West and Non-West

WHAT, THEN, does it mean to live in a world stuck between two normative claimants? It means, for one thing, that diplomatic and economic pressures can be fairly effective in an increasingly globalized world, even against great powers like Russia and China. Certainly, they can be effective enough to be profoundly resented. Like Milosevic over Kosovo, future Russian and Chinese presidents faced with continuing unrest in the Caucasus or Tibet will in effect invoke the Westphalian norms of sovereignty, and a great many fragile new sovereignties in the ex-colonial world will support them in doing so. Like Indonesia and the old Yugoslavia, they often tend to be mini-empires, originally put together by local or European powers from many diverse ethnic or cultural groups. Once the charismatic leader who has secured independence leaves the scene, the army may be the only factor holding those groups together—and that will almost invariably mean the rough suppression of dissidents or separatists. So a Western-driven normative shift that tilts the balance in favor

of discontented minorities looking for self-determination is likely to cause Third World governments to see Russia and China as potential allies on this issue, and the United States and Europe as ill-informed meddlers in matters that are none of their business.

That is not the only subject in which West and non-West will clash over normative issues. Another factor needs to be mentioned because of its diplomatic importance; I shall call it “forced emulation.” One can see a trivial instance of this in process in the rows at the International Whaling Commission. The West (except Norway) has recently evolved a norm that whales are not for eating. The Japanese are still resisting and resenting the pressures to conform. There is in that small instance a vivid symbol of the enormous pressures that non-Western societies are under, in a unipolar globalizing world, to adopt Western norms.

The murderous rage that can be generated among defenders of alternative systems of norms, especially when incited by religious authorities, is most obvious, of course, among Muslim fundamentalists. The United States has had almost universal success in getting governments throughout the world to proclaim an anti-terrorism norm, but whether the underlying populations of the most relevant of those governments really endorse that norm is at best uncertain. One important reason, curiously enough, has to do with the domestic normative shift in Western societies discussed above.

Whether 300 or 1,300 years in incubation, the conflict between the West and Islam has changed dramatically in the past thirty or forty years. For most of its history, this conflict was about power, land, and religion thought of as a creed armed rather than as a basic moral. Muslims and Christians alike had no argument with the bedrock code of the Hebrew Bible when it came to family, sexual and other funda-

mental moral obligations and assumptions. But in the last three or four decades, it is the West that moved rapidly away from these fundamentals. Having so moved, the West then turned around and, mostly by media and commercial-borne inadvertence, begun exporting these new norms to the world of Islam—where they have caused no little trouble and resentment. The critical normative gap between us and them has widened because *we* widened it. And yet this obvious fact is hardly ever noted in the West.

Nationalism, Regionalism, Internationalism, Cosmopolitanism

THE CONNECTION between domestic social norms and those of international society is neither accidental nor marginal. As the bipolar world of the Cold War was shaped by a clash of social ideologies complicated by interstate interests, the current unipolar world seems likely to be shaped by a clash of domestic norms also complicated by interstate interests. Instead of two fairly coherent adversary coalitions and a crowd of interested bystanders, however, we have a free-for-all, largely between young and old. That is to say, the generation factor is important. The young tend to be ardent in pursuit and support of normative shift, even when it is backwards toward older norms. The cultural and normative establishment (or former establishment) tends to be defended especially by the elderly—old communists in Russia, old cardinals in the Catholic Church, ancient ayatollahs in Iran. The middle-aged are often converted to their children’s norms: consider the growth of opposition to the Vietnam war. But they and sometimes the young are nevertheless also often nostalgic for the norms of their parents.

International conflict seems a world away from most of the norms we live by,

norms related to our lives as parents and children, husbands and wives, academics, businessmen, journalists, scientists, employees. Yet domestic norms can have a huge impact on the processes of international politics. Indeed, the doctrines enjoined in mosques and churches and temples and synagogues have clearly engendered many past and present international conflicts, and will undoubtedly go on doing so. As they do, however, they will collide with as many as four organizing principles of international politics: nationalism, regionalism, internationalism and cosmopolitanism.

Nationalism is still undoubtedly the most solidly entrenched and universal of the four. It is also the most dangerous. The wars of nationalism dominated the past two centuries, and its norms can be bent to allow almost any behavior in the interests of the nation. As Cavour said, reflecting on the making of Italy in the late 19th century: "If we had done for ourselves what we have done for our country, what scoundrels we would be."

At least in Europe, however, the teeth of nationalism now seem to have been drawn by the necessities of regionalism. Economic regionalism seems also to be spreading to much of the world: the American hemisphere, South Asia, Southeast Asia, even Africa. But the EU has become a role model that looks much easier to emulate than it actually is.

Internationalism has had a harder row to hoe, especially in the United States, not least because it is attacked both by nationalists and by cosmopolitans. But the almost unstoppable march of globalization will probably push it along. Despite what some right-wing Americans maintain, international organizations from the UN on down have for the past fifty-plus years been useful tools of American for-

eign policy. Dean Acheson once called the UN "a diplomatic do-it-yourself kit", and that is true of most of the others as well. Washington policymakers have used them adroitly over the years, and could once again if they chose to do so—especially if they are wise enough to appreciate that international methods can blunt cosmopolitan efforts to undermine American sovereignty.

Cosmopolitanism, however telegenic, is still the weakest of the four, its norms (so far) those of small minorities. But its potential constituency now is vastly larger than before: media people, international civil servants, the entrepreneurs and managers of transnational enterprises, the academics and scientists who migrate overseas from university to university as their interests and opportunities change. Like the wandering scholars of the Renaissance, they have a common language that helps them earn a living. Then it was Latin; now it is English, which more people already speak as a second language than as a mother tongue. The vast Internet-obsessed cohort of students will multiply those numbers many times.³

It is even possible that cosmopolitan norms may come to be seen as the logical counterpart of a truly globalized world economy, at least to such elites. It will probably not seem so to the grassroots though, and that could mean quite a battle, particularly if that other domestic norm we are supposed to care about in the West—democracy—really means anything. Here perhaps is where domestic social and transnational norms will most portentously clash; here is where the 21st century is leading us. □

³See Peter L. Berger, "Four Faces of Global Culture", *The National Interest* (Fall 1997).

An Inky Wretch

*The Outrageous Genius of Marchamont Nedham*_____

____Paul A. Rahe_____

THE *New York Times* has come under sustained assault in recent years. In 1993, *Times* alumnus Hilton Kramer anticipated the trend when he began writing a weekly *New York Post* column dissecting the gray lady's ongoing machinations. The attack intensified in June 2000 when Ira Stoll, then of the *Wall Street Journal*, set up *smartertimes.com* to expose editorial sloppiness, gross misreporting and telling silences on the part of what purports to be our national newspaper of record. Shortly before Stoll gave up this labor of love to help found the *New York Sun*, Andrew Sullivan began cataloguing on his eponymous web site the most egregious misreporting to be found in the news columns and on the editorial pages of the *Times*. The assault gained in ferocity this past summer when Charles Krauthammer, George Will, the editors of the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Times*' own staffer Bill Keller joined with Sullivan and others in remarking on the degree to which partisanship has come to distort the reporting of the news now that Howell Raines is executive editor of the *New York Times*.

Though true, these accusations need

to be taken with several grains of salt, for the attack on the *Times* presupposes the existence of a golden age when the gray lady actually lived up to her motto: "All the News That's Fit to Print." New Yorkers of a certain age have for decades rolled their eyes when they glanced at the upper left-hand corner of the *Times*' front page. In its own bailiwick, the *Times* has never been above making the most of the peccadilloes of those to whom it is opposed, and over the years it has consistently relegated scandals involving its favorites to the back pages, if not to the executive editor's circular file.

In any case, we should be neither surprised nor shocked to discover that what styles itself as a newspaper of record is and has always been partisan. After all, at its very inception, the newspaper was a product of fierce partisanship. Indeed, one may justly wonder whether serious journalism could be sustained in the absence of partisan strife. Our interest in knowing is quite often inspired by our inclination to take sides, and the desire to inform and the desire to instruct are virtually inseparable. That is why there is not now, never has been, and never will be a nonpartisan press.

There is a difference, however, between competent and intelligent partisanship, and the less sustainable, transparent, clumsy, embarrassing sort we have lately seen at the *Times*. For an

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example of press partisanship that was not just competent but almost impossibly versatile, we could do worse than to go back to the very beginning of political journalism—to the career of one Marchamont Nedham.

In the Beginning...

WHAT WE call a newspaper was once termed a newsbook. Published serially as a weekly gazette, the newsbook picked up precisely where the pamphlet left off. The first newsbook made its debut in London on November 29, 1641 on the eve of the English Civil War. The Irish rebellion had quite recently broken out, and two days thereafter Parliament presented the Grand Remonstrance to a startled and distraught king. The inventor of the newsbook was an entrepreneurial young bookseller and printer of pamphlets named John Thomas, who had hitherto been closely associated with John Pym, then the dominant figure in what later came to be called the Long Parliament. At this critical juncture, Thomas sought to answer what Pym and his associates in Parliament evidently took to be a necessity: reporting to the people of England the deliberations in Parliament that had given rise to the remonstrance, thereby extending to them an unprecedented invitation to adjudicate the bitter dispute emerging between Parliament and the king.¹

The opinions of ordinary people matter as the ultimate underpinning for political regimes. They have always mattered, even when dormant, and they always will. In Thomas' day, however, opinion mattered as it had at no time subsequent to the demise of the Roman republic, for it had been thoroughly aroused from its torpor and the people had been apprised of their power and instructed in its legitimacy. Thanks to moveable type, the popu-

lace of England had become what it had never before been: a *public*—a wakeful community able to judge.

The printing press was even more essential to England's Great Rebellion than it had been to the Protestant Reformation. The surviving English pamphlet literature of the period stretching from 1628 to 1660 is greater than that of the American and French revolutions put together. Thomas prospered, imitators soon flooded the market, and even the royal court found it necessary to sponsor Cavalier newsbooks to answer the Roundhead onslaught—an astounding fact when one considers the court's notorious reluctance to compromise its established authority by appealing to public opinion.² Every gazette sought to rally those sympathetic to its faction, to inform and encourage them, and to provide them with the arguments necessary to sustain the cause. Each sought to persuade the uncommitted and dishearten the opposition. Each sought, as well, to reshape and direct opinion and to prepare the public for shifts in policy already contemplated or at a distance foreseen. Along the way, even Royalist pamphleteers and newsbook editors contributed powerfully, if unwittingly, to a process of democratization by which a much larger public was invited to join, and indeed did join, the political nation.

The Cavaliers, who had good reason to regret this development, were especially sensitive to its consequences. Looking back in mid-December 1648, some seven

¹See Joseph Frank, *The Beginnings of the English Newspaper, 1620–1660* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961); and Joad Raymond, *The Invention of the Newspaper: English Newsbooks, 1641–1649* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

²See Peter W. Thomas, *Sir John Berkenhead, 1617–1679: A Royalist Career in Politics and Polemics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), pp. 28–126.

weeks before the execution of Charles I, the editor of *Mercurius Impartialis* attributed “the ruines both of King and people” to “the Pulpit and the Presse.” It was from these two sources, he argued, that “his Majesties Subjects [have] beene Poysoned with Principles of Heresie, Schisme, Faction, Sedition, Blasphemy, Apostacie, Rebellion, Treason, Sacriledge, Murther, Rapine, Robbery, and all” the other “enormous Crimes, and detestable Villanies, with which this Kingdome hath of later times swarmed.”³

For the first time in history, the press was arguably more of a force even than the pulpit. The invention of moveable type offered a new species of clerk, the man of letters, an opportunity to pass judgment on the princes of Europe, and it gave him occasion in which to invite his readers to do so as well. It promised to liberate the classically-trained humanist from mere service to power, indeed, to transform him into what we now call “the public intellectual.”⁴ In making censors of the learned and judges of ordinary readers, the public prints promised a species of emancipation to all. This did not escape the notice of contemporary witnesses. As one newsbook writer observed on the eve of the execution of the king, there was a real difference between the English people in Queen Elizabeth’s day and those in his own time. The former had been

rather guided by the tradition of their Fathers, than by acting principles in reason and knowledge. But to the contrary in these our dayes, the meanest sort of people are not only able to write, &c. but to argue and discourse on matters of highest concernment; and thereupon do desire, that such things which are most remarkable, may be truly committed to writing, and made publique.⁵

As this observation suggests, it was

printing, not the pulpit, that first conjured into existence and opened up the space that is now termed “the public sphere.”⁶ It was this space that John Milton had set out to defend in November 1644 when he published an unprecedented attack on the licensing of the press in his pamphlet *Areopagitica*. More than three decades after the first appearance of the newsbook, the poet Andrew Marvell could easily imagine a “young Priest” of the High Anglican persuasion “inclined to sacrifice to the Genius of the Age; yea, though his Conscience were the Offering”, deploying the pulpit against “the Press” envisaged as a “villanous Engine . . . invented much about the same time with the Reformation, that hath done more mischief to the Discipline of our Church, than all the Doctrine can make amends for.” It would be characteristic of so “malapert”, a “Chaplain”, he supposed, that he should regard “Printing” as a disturber of “the Peace of Mankind” and lament “that Lead, when moulded into Bullets, is not so mortal as when founded into Letters”—all the while thinking to himself,

³*Mercurius Impartialis* 1 (December 12, 1648).

⁴See my “The Idea of the Public Intellectual in the Age of the Enlightenment”, in Arthur Melzer, Jerry Weinberger & M. Richard Zinman, eds., *The Public Intellectual: Between Philosophy and Politics* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, forthcoming).

⁵Daniel Border, *The Perfect Weekly Account* 45 (January 17–28, 1649), p. 357.

⁶See Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, translated by Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991), and Joad Raymond, “The Newspaper, Public Opinion, and the Public Sphere in the Seventeenth Century”, in Joad Raymond, ed. *News, Newspapers, and Society in Early Modern Britain* (London: Frank Cass, 1999), pp. 109–40.

'Twas an happy time when all Learning was in Manuscript, and some little Officer . . . did keep the Keys of the Library. When the Clergy needed no more knowledge then to read the Liturgy, and the Laity no more Clerkship than to save them from Hanging. . . . There have been wayes found out to banish Ministers, to fine not only the People, but even the Grounds and Fields where they assembled in Conventicles: But no Art yet could prevent these seditious meetings of Letters. Two or three brawny Fellows in a Corner, with meer Ink and Elbow-grease, do more harm than an hundred Systematical Divines with their sweaty Preaching.⁷

Marvell's satire was exceedingly apt. A decade before, at the time of the Restoration, the Royalist penman Roger L'Estrange had in all seriousness made precisely the same point, observing, "it has been made a Question long agoe, whether more mischief than advantage were not occasion'd to the Christian world by the Invention of Typography."⁸

The Ur Editorialist

L'ESTRANGE made these remarks in passing in a pamphlet arguing for the execution of a particularly influential journalist named Marchamont Nedham. Born in August 1620 at Burford in Gloucestershire into a genteel family of modest means, Nedham had studied at All Souls College and had taken his B.A. from the University of Oxford in 1637. He then worked briefly as an usher at Merchant Taylor's School in London and as an underclerk at Gray's Inn before discovering his true *métier*. When he first took up his pen to write for the public prints less than two years after John Thomas had introduced the newsbook, he was barely 23 years in age.

Nedham was an entertainer of sorts and a time-server—"a jack of all sides", as

one contemporary critic put it, "transcendently gifted in opprobrious and treasonable Droll."⁹ In the course of a long and checkered career—stretching from early in the English Civil War in 1643 to a time shortly before his death in 1678, when the Exclusion Crisis was just getting underway—he displayed a political and moral flexibility and a lust for lucre exceeded only by his talent.¹⁰ He began as a fierce

⁷See Marvell, *The Rehearsal Transpros'd* (1672), in D.I.B. Smith, ed., *The Rehearsal Transpros'd and The Rehearsal Transpros'd: The Second Part* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 4–5.

⁸See [Roger L'Estrange], *A Rope for Pol, or, A Hue and Cry after Marchemont Nedham* (London: [s.n.], 1660), Advertisement to the Reader.

⁹James Heath, *A Brief Chronicle of the Late Intestine War*, the second impression greatly enlarged (London: n.p., 1663), p. 492.

¹⁰For the details, see Joseph Frank, *Cromwell's Press Agent: A Critical Biography of Marchamont Nedham, 1620–1678* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1980). For a more penetrating analysis of what Nedham was up to, see Blair Worden, "'Wit in a Roundhead': The Dilemma of Marchamont Nedham", in Susan D. Amussen and Mark A. Kishlansky, ed., *Political Culture and Cultural Politics in Early Modern England: Essays Presented to David Underdown* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1995), pp. 301–37; "Milton and Marchamont Nedham" in David Armitage, Armand Himy and Quentin Skinner, eds., *Milton and Republicanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 156–80, and "Marchamont Nedham and the Beginnings of English Republicanism, 1649–1656", in David Wootton, ed., *Republicanism, Liberty, and Commercial Society, 1649–1776* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), pp. 45–81, along with Joad Raymond, "The Cracking of the Republican Spokes", *Prose Studies* 19 (1996), pp. 255–74, and "'A Mercury with a Winged Conscience': Marchamont Nedham, Monopoly and Censorship", *Media History* 4 (1998), pp. 7–18.

defender of the parliamentary cause, switched in 1647 to the side of the king—and then, some nine months after his royal patron's demise and while on the lam from Newgate Jail, he wrote to offer his services to the presiding officer of the regicide court.

Nedham's was not a costive muse. In the course of his career, he published more than 34 pamphlets and books. In addition, he composed most of the copy that appeared in the Roundhead newsbook *Mercurius Britanicus*, then edited the Cavalier newsbook *Mercurius Pragmaticus*; and then (for a brief time under license from his friend John Milton) he edited the newsbook *Mercurius Politicus*—in turn for the Rump, for the Nominated Parliament, for the Protectorate, and for the Rump twice again, celebrating the *coups d'état* that overthrew each, and in the end, even hailing the return of the king. On the eve of the Restoration, after publishing a brief but bitter satire warning the Roundheads of Royalist vengeance to come, he prudently withdrew into exile. But soon he managed to purchase for himself a personal pardon. And while many of his erstwhile associates suffered execution, imprisonment or exile, he ended his days writing pamphlets for Charles II, the Earl of Danby, and their Tory allies. Nedham wrote such pamphlets against the Exclusion Whigs and their leader, the first Earl of Shaftesbury, whom Nedham had the effrontery to denounce not just as “a man of . . . dapper Conscience, and dexterity, that can dance through a Hoop; or that can be a Tumbler through Parties, or a small Teazer of Religions, and Tonzer of Factions”, but also as “a Pettifogger of Politicks” ever ready “to shift Principles like Shirts”; and “quit an unlucky Side in a fright at the noise of a New Prevailing Party”, and even as “a Will-with-a-Wisp, that uses to lead Men out of the way;

then leaves them at last in a Ditch and Darkness, and nimbly retreats for Self-security.”¹¹

No darker pot ever insulted a kettle. As should by now be clear, Nedham himself was a man of dapper conscience and dexterity extraordinaire; he had a well-earned reputation for shifting principles like shirts; and he was certainly a Will-with-a-Wisp, possessed of what one contemporary described as “a dextrous faculty of creeping into the breech of every Rising Power.”¹² What he lacked in constancy to other men, this inky wretch made up for in audacity. The vigor of the language that he deployed in his denunciation of Shaftesbury, his light touch therein, and the vividness of the metaphors he found apt suggest on his part a certain grudging admiration for the man—the appreciation of one virtuoso for a bravura performance of another.

Nedham's own virtuosity as a flack invited on the part of his critics similar flights of fancy. On the eve of the Restoration, an opponent described him as “a Mercury with a winged conscience, the Skip-Jack of all fortunes, that like a Shittle-cock drive him which way you will, falls still with the Cork end forwards.”¹³ In a satirical pamphlet published early in 1660, the editor of *Mercurius Politicus* is represented as taking leave of his regicide associates with the following words: “for now [that] the *scene's* alter'd, I must go change my habit; if ever the times turn, you shall find me as faithful as

¹¹See [Marchamont Nedham], *A Pacquet of Advices and Animadversions, Sent from London to the Men of Shaftesbury* (London: [s. n.], 1676), pp. 2, 30.

¹²See *Fanatique Queries Propos'd to the Present Assertors of the Good Old Cause* (London: Printed for Praise-God-Barebones, the Rumps Leather-seller, 1660), p. 4.

¹³[Samuel Butler], *The Character of the Rump* (London: [s.n.], 1660), p. 3.

I was before.”¹⁴ Another critic predicted at that time that Nedham would soon be writing for the Cavaliers. “He is like a Catt”, he wrote, “that (throw him which way you will) still light[s] on his feet.”¹⁵

If this particular journalist did land right-side up and light on his feet at every toss and turn, if he was almost always in someone’s pay, it was because, at every stage in the set of struggles that defined his age, his was the indispensable pen. No one in his generation knew how to sway English public opinion more effectively than he. Marchamont Nedham could not only sow the whirlwind; he could ride the storm as well.

Of Interests and Ideas

THAT L’ESTRANGE should have articulated his attack on the press in a pamphlet demanding that none other than Marchamont Nedham be indicted for treason stands to reason. Nedham was a true pioneer. He was the first intellectual journalist, the very model of a modern sophist, the harbinger of much that we now take for granted; by 1660 his name had come to be synonymous with the press. This man of many masks, who had passed himself off as *Mercurius Britannicus*, then as *Mercurius Pragmaticus*, and finally as *Mercurius Politicus*, was, as L’Estrange readily conceded, “the *Golia[t]h* of the *Philistines*”, and his “pen was in comparison of others like a Weavers beam.” It is, L’Estrange added, “incredible what influence” his weekly newsbooks “had upon numbers of inconsidering persons.” Nedham had “with so much malice calumniated his Sovereign, so scurrilously abused the Nobility, so impudently blasphemed the Church, and so industriously poysoned the people with dangerous principles” that, had “the Devil himself (the Father of Lies)” held this particular journalist’s office, “he could not have exceeded him.”¹⁶

As seems only fitting, it was this self-same diabolical colossus who first deployed in the public prints Niccolò Machiavelli’s reflections on the rise and fall of republics, doing so in a systematic effort to sort out the practical exigencies of England’s republican experiment.¹⁷ Nedham had never been averse to the Florentine, and from early on he had brazenly championed *raison d’état* as preached by the Duc de Rohan, arguing that it is material interest—not justice, honor or religion—that makes the world go round.¹⁸ In *The Case of the Kingdom Stated, According to the Proper Interests of the Severall Parties Ingaged*, the first tract that Nedham wrote in any way sympathetic to the Royalist cause, he first cited this renowned Huguenot grandee, then analyzed in cold-blooded terms the interests of England’s various contending parties, and ultimately advised patience on the part of the king. He argued that Charles could profit from the quarrel then emerging between the Presbyterians and Independents if he tarried until the moment when “his onely *Interest* will be, to *close* with that *Party* which gives most *hope* of *Indulgence* to his *Prerogative*, &

¹⁴See *The Private Debates, Conferences and Resolutions, Of the Late Rump* (London: [s.n.], 1660), p. 30.

¹⁵*A Word for All: Or, The Rumps Funeral Sermon: Held forth by Mr. Feak to a Conventicle of Fanatiques at Bedlam upon the Last Dissolution of the Half Quarter Parliament* (London: [s.n.], 1660).

¹⁶See [L’Estrange], *A Rope for Pol*, Advertisement to the Reader.

¹⁷[Marchamont Nedham], *The Excellencie of a Free State* (London: Thomas Brewster, 1656).

¹⁸Here see Felix Raab, *The English Face of Machiavelli: A Changing Interpretation, 1500–1700* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964), pp. 159–63, 228–30; and J.A.W. Gunn, *Politics and the Public Interest in the Seventeenth Century* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), pp. 33–35, 43–4, 52.

greatest probability of *favor* to his *Friends*.” The policy of divide and rule is, he explained, “what *Machiavell* sets downe as a sure *Principle* towards the purchase of *Empire*.”¹⁹

Of course, when the rhetorical situation required it, Nedham could pass himself off as a believing Christian and frequently did so, and he was perfectly capable of speaking in the familiar accents of moral rectitude, denouncing one side or the other for an addiction to hypocrisy, blasphemy and vice. But nearly as often, especially when the opportunity for candor presented itself, he displayed an outright contempt for high-mindedness of virtually every kind. “Interest”, he insisted,

is the true *Zenith* of every State and Person, according to which they may certainly be understood, though cloathed never so much with the most specious disguise of Religion, Justice and Necessity: And Actions are the effects of Interests, from whom they proceed, and to whom they tend naturally as the stone doth downward.²⁰

Nedham’s skepticism in matters religious and moral, his propensity for scoffing and his fascination with Machiavelli may, indeed, be the key to understanding his astonishing trajectory. He was venal and mercenary but not lacking in courage. In that unstable age, he accommodated every twist and turn in the course of events without betraying the slightest sign of any discomfort or shame, and he served each and every one of his masters with vigor and panache, displaying a gift for invective and a literary virtuosity that made him one of the minor wonders of the age. It was almost as if moral and political dexterity was for Nedham itself a matter of principle. He seems to have taken to heart his friend Henry Oxinden’s contention that, to survive in the world, one must practice

“the art of dissimulation” and not be “startled” or “troubled chameleon-like, as the necessity of occasion serves, to turn into all shapes” since even “the most constant men must be content to change their resolutions according to the alterations of time.”²¹

Chameleon-like Nedham certainly was, as was he shameless. Some would have called him reptilian, and many thought him louché. But servile and fawning he was never. He may have been pliant, accommodating and all too ready to please; he earned the obloquy to which he was exposed. But if he was often bent, Nedham never once bowed. On two occasions, he was imprisoned for what he had written, and he repeatedly tested the limits of what his employers could tolerate. In 1660, when he joined John Milton in futile resistance to the rising Royalist tide, he consciously courted the noose. Think of him what you will: Marchamont Nedham was anything but risk-averse.

Moreover, when he stuck out his neck, this gifted scrivener was not just chasing cheap thrills. He seems invariably to have been pursuing a political agenda all his own. There need be no doubt that he preferred republican government to hereditary monarchy, and religious toleration (within an exceedingly loose Erastian establishment organized along congregationalist lines) to the

¹⁹See M[archamont] N[edham], *The Case of the Kingdom Stated, According to the Proper Interests of the Severall Parties Engaged*, second edition (London: [s. n.], 1647), *passim* (esp., sig. A2v, 1).

²⁰See A Friend to this Commonwealth [Marchamont Nedham], *The Case Stated between England and the United Provinces, in this Present Juncture* (London: Thomas Newcomb, 1652), p. 23.

²¹British Library, Additional MS. 28,001 (Oxinden papers), fos. 117, 118v, as cited by Worden, “Wit in a Roundhead”, p. 304.

species of enforced uniformity and discipline sought variously by Anglican Royalists and Presbyterian divines. But Nedham's preferences, serious for him though they clearly were, never led him to excess. He was first and foremost a practical man—always willing to settle for the best that he thought he could get, never disposed to a bootless sacrifice of self, and perfectly ready to argue that, in adversity, it is one's God-given duty to turn one's coat, which, of course, more than once he dutifully did.²²

A Friend to Liberty

NEDHAM was a man of what, with some hesitation, we might call the libertarian Left. Above all else, he hated priestcraft. In 1650, when he published a pamphlet in defense of the English republic entitled *The Case of the Commonwealth of England Stated*, he directed his invective against what he called "our modern Pharisee, the conscientious pretender and principal disturber of the public peace", who was intent on propagating what Nedham denounced as "an opinionated humour." In the process, he made it clear that he preferred what he dubbed "the worldling . . . the greater part of the world being led more by appetites of convenience, and commodity than the dictates of conscience."

His real purpose in this tract was to rally the Royalists to the new order and isolate the Presbyterians, to whom he attributed all of the vices that Machiavelli had ascribed to the species of Christianity predominant in his own time. Presbyterianism, Nedham observed, has "contracted so many adulterations of worldly interest that it hath lost the beauty which it once appeared to have and serves every sophister as a cloak to cover his ambitious design." Nedham lamented that

so many knowing men and of able parts should prove so degenerate as to prostitute themselves and the majesty of the nation to serve the ambitious ends of a few priests.

In his judgment, the proposed Presbyterian course was "destructive to every man's interest of conscience and liberty" and would eventuate in "an intolerable tyranny over magistrates and people." This "mad discipline" would not only eliminate the bishops and clip "the wings of regality", but also

intrench also upon the lawyers, curb the gentry in their own lordships by a strange way of parochial tyranny, and bring all people into the condition of mere galley slaves while the blind priests sit at the stern and their hackney dependants, the elders, hold an oar in every boat.

Nedham saw at the heart of Presbyterianism "the popish trick taken up by the presbyterian priests in drawing all secular affairs 'within the compass of their spiritual jurisdiction.'" In claiming the right to judge "scandalous sins", they extended their reach to

every action of human life. So that all the people besides their favorites, from the counselor to the beggar, must at every turn stoop like asses to be ridden by them and their arbitrary assemblies.

Presbyterian discipline is, Nedham firmly insisted, indistinguishable from that of "the Church of Rome." Wherever there is "a jurisdiction in the church . . . distinct from the civil", it will prove impossible to keep "church discipline within its limits."²³

²²*Mercurius Politicus* 66 (September 4–11, 1651), p. 1045.

²³Marchamont Nedham, *The Case of the Commonwealth of England, Stated* (1650), Philip A. Knachel, ed. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1969), pp. 4, 7–14, 87–95.

Even in his early days at *Mercurius Britanicus* as a scrivener writing in support of the parliamentary cause, Nedham had been a radical—working in cooperation with the war party in Parliament, intent on polarizing the political situation, eager to subvert all deference to the monarchy, and devoted from early on to securing the deposition of Charles I. It is not, then, surprising that as editor of *Mercurius Politicus* he sought to bolster the partisans of the regicide republic in their audacity by celebrating the execution of his erstwhile royal patron, by insisting that a repudiation of monarchy be the cornerstone of the new regime, and by advancing on the Commonwealth's part an ambitious foreign policy aimed not just at promoting Protestantism but at spreading the revolution to a continent that seemed—in the wake of the Reformation, the Wars of Religion in France, and the Thirty Years' War in Germany—to be poised on the edge of a republican transformation comparable to the one that England had itself undergone.

What such a revolution required he intimated in the pages of his newsbook, denouncing, as he did in the very first issue, the Royalists and their Presbyterian allies as “*Priest ridden*”, and charging that “for the carrying on” of their “traiterous *Designe*” the latter “have farr out-stript the *Jesuit*, both in *Practise and Project*.” For all of their sophistication, he contended, his contemporaries “may be still at the same pass” as their “*Fore-Fathers*” since the “*new Clergie* are still the same *Idol*, only a little disguised with a new dress of *Mummery*.” It is perfectly consistent with his critique of priestcraft that Nedham should similarly depict “the vanity of admiring *Kings*, [of] placing Them in a lofty seat of *Impunity*, like *Gods*”, as a species of “*Idolatry*” grounded in a “*Superstition*” inculcated by the “*antiquated Cheats of the Clergy*.” By eliminating ecclesiastical jurisdiction altogether and by rigorously sub-

ordinating the church to a republican state, Nedham hoped to strip from “the *mystery of Tyranny*” all the “gaudy Robes, and gay Appearances” conferred upon it by “*ancient Christian Policie*.”²⁴

To grasp fully what Nedham had in mind, one must attend carefully to the third issue of the English Commonwealth's semi-official gazette, wherein its editor makes a passing, but highly revealing observation to the effect that

Churchmen of all Religions and Nations are of the same humor, to imbroile the world up to the ears in Blood rather than part with one Tittle of that Power and Profit, which may serve to satisfie the avarice and Ambition of their Interest and order.²⁵

In the 1640s and 1650s, when Marchamont Nedham and his allies in Parliament threw their weight behind the Independents, insisting on a radical interpretation of the Protestant doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and contending that “with God there is no respect of Persons”,²⁶ they harbored intentions regarding the Christian religion far more subversive than their godly republican allies ever imagined.

Nedham and his friends did not achieve the radical transformation at which they aimed. They did, however, set a precedent from which their successors profited at the time of the American and French revolutions. *The Excellencie of a Free State* was reprinted in London in 1767 and dispatched to the American colonists; it was translated into French in 1790 and widely read. John Adams excerpted it in his *Defense of the*

²⁴*Mercurius Politicus* 1 (June 6–13, 1650), p. 4; 55 (June 19–26, 1651), p. 879–82; 56 (June 26–July 3 1651), pp. 885–7; 58 (July 10–17, 1651), pp. 917–8; and 99 (April 22–29, 1652), pp. 1553–6.

²⁵*Mercurius Politicus* 3 (June 20–27, 1650), p. 46.

²⁶*Mercurius Politicus* 58 (July 10–17, 1651), p. 918.

Constitutions of the United States of America in the 1780s, and the Marquis de Condorcet cited the work in his influential discussion of the progress of the human mind. If we live in secular republics distinguished by a separation of church and state, if we are no longer in thrall to a condominium of princes and priests, it is in part because of the challenge laid down in the 1640s and 1650s by a disreputable journalist who shifted his political loyalties almost as often as he changed his shirts.

MARCHAMONT Nedham was willing to engage in chicanery on a scale that few journalists today would have the wit to imagine. But if he was ready to turn coat in a trice, that is what his tumultuous times required of a hired hand intent on surreptitiously nudging the nascent British “public” in a secular, republican direction. If the world’s first great journalist was promiscuous in his partisanship, it was in part because he was true to his principles. Nedham always knew what he was about and was unsurpassedly clever in concealing it as he moved from patron to benefactor to protector and back again.

Of course, it was never Nedham’s privilege to edit a newspaper that had earned the ring of independent authority. Thanks to the efforts of the Rump and of Oliver Cromwell, *Mercurius Politicus* was in command of something approaching a monopoly of opinion-making much of the time. There was never any doubt that

it spoke for the ruling order, however ephemeral that order might be—for the Rump, for the Nominated Parliament, for Oliver Cromwell, for his ill-fated son, for the Rump twice more: for whomever currently paid the bills. No one reading the gazettes with which Nedham was associated ever expected an impartial representation of events. But they did expect to be engaged seriously at an intellectual level appropriate to the subject, and they were.

What distinguishes Howell Raines from Marchamont Nedham, therefore, is less a matter of journalistic integrity or partisanship than a question of competence. Had a journal with the reputation of the *New York Times* existed in his day, and had he been given its command, Nedham would have had the wit to recognize its value. He would have taken care to preserve the franchise and would never have squandered an authority it had taken generations to accumulate. He was sly enough to be able to foresee that, in abandoning the appearance of impartiality and in turning itself into the vehicle of a political sect, such a journal would be jettisoning its effectiveness as a partisan tool. The temptation for an abuse of trust attendant on the possession of a power seemingly unchecked is no doubt great—but, as Nedham would have understood, resisting that temptation is prerequisite for persuasion. Perhaps the inky wretches of our own day will at some point come to recognize this. But, alas, not yet. □

I think a man is doing his reporting well only when people start to hate him.

—V.S. Naipaul

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The Scandal of U.S.-Saudi Relations

—Daniel Pipes—

When it comes to the Saudi-American relationship, the White House should be called the 'White Tent.'

Mohammed Al-Khilewi, a Saudi diplomat who defected to the United States¹

CONSIDER TWO symbolic moments in the U.S.-Saudi relationship involving a visit by one leader to the other's country. In November 1990, President George H.W. Bush went to the Persian Gulf region with his wife and top congressional leaders at Thanksgiving time to visit the 400,000 troops gathered in Saudi Arabia, whom he sent there to protect that country from an Iraqi invasion. When the Saudi authorities learned that the President intended to say grace before a festive Thanksgiving dinner, they remonstrated; Saudi Arabia knows only one religion, they said, and that is Islam. Bush acceded, and he and his entourage instead celebrated the holiday on the U.S.S. *Durham*, an amphibious cargo ship sitting in international waters.

In April 2002, as Crown Prince Abdallah of Saudi Arabia, the country's effective ruler, was about to travel across Texas to visit President George W. Bush,

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an advance group talked to the airport manager in Waco (the airport serving the President's ranch in Crawford) "and told him they did not want any females on the ramp and also said there should not be any females talking to the airplane."² The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) at Waco complied with this request and passed it to three other FAA stations on the crown prince's route, which also complied. Then, when queried about this matter, both the FAA and the State Department joined the Saudi foreign minister in flat-out denying that there ever was a Saudi request for male-only controllers.

The import of these incidents is clear enough: Official Americans in Saudi Arabia bend to Saudi customs, and official Americans in the United States do so as well. And it's not just a matter of travel etiquette; one finds parallel American obsequiousness concerning such issues as energy, security, religion and personal status. The Saudis routinely set the terms of this bilateral relationship. For decades, U.S. government agencies have engaged in a consistent pattern of deference to

¹Quoted in "Statement by Patricia M. Roush before the Committee on Government Reform, U.S. House of Representatives", June 12, 2002, p. 3.

²An executive engaged in running the Waco airport, quoted in the *Dallas Morning News*, April 27, 2002.

Saudi wishes, making so many unwonted and unnecessary concessions that one gets the impression that a switch has taken place, with both sides forgetting which of them is the great power and which the minor one. I shall first document this claim, then offer an explanation for it, and conclude with a policy recommendation.

Small-Scale Obsequiousness

U.S. GOVERNMENT acceptance of Saudi norms is particularly evident as concerns the treatment of women, children, practicing Christians and Jews.

WOMEN

The U.S. government accepts the unequal treatment of women in connection with Saudi Arabia that it would otherwise never countenance. Two current examples tell the story.

Starting in 1991, the U.S. military required its female personnel based in Saudi Arabia to wear black, head-to-foot *abayas*. (This makes Saudi Arabia the only country in the world where U.S. military personnel are expected to wear a religiously-mandated garment.) Further, the women had to ride in the back seat of vehicles and be accompanied by a man when off base.

In 1995, Lt. Col. Martha McCally, the highest-ranking female fighter pilot in the U.S. Air Force, initiated an effort within the system to end this discriminatory treatment. As she put it, "I'm able to be in leadership positions and fly combat sorties into enemy territory, yet when I leave the base, I hand over the keys to my sub-

ordinate men, sit in the back, and put on a Muslim outfit that is very demeaning and humiliating."³ Not succeeding within the system, McCally went public with a law suit in early 2002. Her complaint points to the violation of her free speech, the separation of church and state, and gender discrimination. (Male military personnel not only have no parallel requirements imposed on them but are specifically *forbidden* from wearing Saudi clothing, and non-military women working for the U.S. government in Saudi Arabia are not expected to wear an *abaya*.⁴)



Lt. Col. Martha E. McCally

AP Photo/File

After McCally filed her law suit, the Department of Defense responded by changing the requirement that women wear *abayas* off base; it then rescinded the policies on the other two issues (sitting in the back of a vehicle; having a male escort). Yet these were largely cosmetic changes, for women are still "strongly encouraged" to follow the old rules so as to take "host nation sensitivity" into account. The U.S. government continues to purchase and issue *abayas*. McCally has argued that the military's "strongly encouraged" *abayas* effectively continue the old regimen, as women who do not wear the Saudi garb fear harm to their careers; so she has continued with her suit. Finally, the House of Representatives in May 2002 voted unanimously to prohibit the Pentagon from "formally or informally" urging servicewomen to wear *abayas* and forbade the Pentagon from

³Fox News, March 1, 2002.

⁴CNN, April 25, 2002.

buying *abayas* for servicewomen. (The Senate has not yet acted on this measure.)

The Executive Branch's weak policy *vis-à-vis* women's rights has an impact on private institutions, as well, which also discriminate against women. U.S. businessmen and diplomats in Riyadh

say the biggest U.S. companies in Saudi Arabia—ExxonMobil, ChevronTexaco and Boeing—do not employ any women. Several other U.S. companies, including Citibank, Saks Fifth Avenue, Philip Morris and Procter & Gamble, have women on their payroll, but they work in offices segregated from men, as is the [Saudi] custom. The Saudis do not disclose employment practices of the more than 100 U.S. companies operating in Saudi Arabia, but American businessmen say that to their knowledge, all the companies follow Saudi mores so they don't jeopardize their investments.

One Western diplomat complains that American businessmen use empty excuses, such as the demands of local laws, there being no place for the women to sit or go to the toilet, and concludes that, "It's just like it was in South Africa."⁵

CHILDREN

The pattern of Saudi fathers abducting children from the United States to Saudi Arabia, and then keeping them there with the full agreement of the Saudi authorities, affects at least 92 children of U.S. mothers and Saudi fathers, perhaps many more. In each of these heartbreaking cases, the State Department has behaved with weakness bordering on sycophancy. To be specific, it has accepted the Saudi law that gives the father near-absolute control over the movement and activities of his children and wife (or wives). The department has made no real efforts to signal its displeasure to the Saudi authorities over these cases, much less made vigorous efforts to free the children held against their American families' wishes.

Here are three cases featured at a June 2002 hearing in the House of Representatives, organized by Rep. Dan Burton (R-IN):

Alia (b. 1979) and Aisha (b. 1982) al-Gheshayan, are two girls born in the United States and abducted to Saudi Arabia in 1986 by their father, Khalid al-Gheshayan, in defiance of a U.S. court order. Until this past August, they were not allowed to leave Saudi Arabia and their mother, Pat Roush, has had only a few minutes to visit them over the many years. Both children have now reached adulthood and both have been married off; but as females, they cannot leave the country without their male guardian's protection—first their father, now their husbands.⁶ One U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia (Walter Cutler) tried to get the children released, only to be instructed by the State Department to "maintain

⁵*USA Today*, May 13, 2002.

⁶The State Department's unwillingness to stand up for U.S. citizens held in Saudi Arabia was highlighted in August 2002: at the precise moment when Rep. Burton was leading a congressional delegation to Riyadh to seek the release of abducted Americans, the Gheshayan sisters surfaced in London "on vacation" and met with an American consular official—not in the U.S. embassy, but in a luxury hotel overflowing with high-powered Saudis and their American employees. There they ostensibly renounced the United States and their mother, even as they praised Osama bin Laden. The State Department rejected accusations that the sisters were coerced or under duress during this meeting, or at any time during their stay in London. This was despite the questionable role of the translator, a strong possibility that Saudis were listening in on the conversation (and the likelihood that the sisters knew it), and the failure of U.S. diplomats to inform the two of their rights as American citizens to travel freely, without exit visas or prior permission from anyone.

impartiality” in this dispute, after which his efforts to assist came to an end.⁷ A second ambassador (Hume Horan) brought the matter up with a ranking Saudi official but soon after found himself recalled due to Saudi complaints. A third ambassador (Roy Mabus) devised a plan to put pressure on the Gheshayan family to spring the children but, after his departure, the steps he took were all reversed.

Rasheed (b. 1976) and Amjad (b. 1983) Radwan are a boy and girl born in the United States who moved with their parents to Saudi Arabia in 1985. After their father, Nizar Radwan, divorced their mother, Monica Stowers, in 1986, he refused to permit the children to leave the country with her. Stowers left for four years, then returned to take back her children in 1990. In December of that year, she did get them and all three took refuge in the American Embassy, where Stowers desperately sought help to take her children out of the country. Instead, the consul general ordered the Marines to evict mother and children from the premises. Shortly after, the children were taken back to the father and their mother was jailed. Rasheed, being male, could leave Saudi Arabia, which he did in 1996; his sister remains confined there as she enters adulthood.

Yasmine Shalhoub (b. 1986), a girl born in the United States, was abducted by her father to Saudi Arabia in 1997. As her mother, Miriam Hernandez, developed plans to extricate Yasmine from her captivity, the American Embassy made it clear that it would provide no help against the father’s wishes. Left on her own, Hernandez did find a way to smuggle Yasmine out in 1999, and she is now back in the United States—no thanks to her diplomatic representatives.

In all three of these cases—and in the many others like them—the U.S. government has singularly failed to stand up for the rights of its most vulnerable citizens.

CHRISTIANS

In Saudi Arabia, the U.S. government submits to restrictions on Christian practices that it would find totally unacceptable anywhere else in the world—starting with the U.S. president’s not celebrating Thanksgiving in the Kingdom, as mentioned above. The hundreds of thousands of American troops in Saudi Arabia in December 1990 were not permitted to hold formal Christmas services at their bases on Saudi soil; all that was allowed to them were “C-word morale services” held in places where they would be invisible to the outside world, such as tents and mess halls. The goal was for no Saudi to be made to suffer the knowledge that Christians were at prayer.⁸

At least the soldiers in 1990–91 could hold services, a privilege not normally accorded Americans in Saudi Arabia on official business. Timothy Hunter, a State Department employee based in Saudi Arabia during 1992–95 (a rare source of information from inside the U.S. establishment in Saudi Arabia, and one subjected to reprisals for his whistle-blowing activities), had the job of “monitoring and coordinating the ‘Tuesday Lecture’ at the Jeddah consulate general—really the Catholic cata-

⁷Quoted in “Statement by Patricia M. Roush”, p. 17.

⁸The State Department remembers the Operation Desert Storm era quite differently—as a time of “U.S.-Saudi cooperation in the areas of cultural accommodation.” Here is its idea of balance: “The United States military issued general orders prohibiting the consumption of alcohol and setting guidelines for off-duty behavior and attire. Saudi Arabia accommodated U.S. culture and its military procedures by allowing U.S. servicewomen to serve in their varied roles throughout the Kingdom—a major step for a highly patriarchal society.” See “Background Note: Saudi Arabia” at <http://www.state.gov>.

comb.”⁹ (Services in Jeddah, he explains, took place on Tuesday, not Sunday, due to the paucity of clergy and their need to be in other locations on Sundays.) In an article in the *Middle East Quarterly*, Hunter details the methods he was told to use to discourage Catholic worshippers and the even worse options faced by Protestants:

When Catholic Americans sought permission to worship, I was to receive their telephone inquiries and deflect them by pretending not to know about the ‘Tuesday Lecture.’ Only if a person kept calling back and insisting that such a group existed was I to meet with him and get a sense of his trustworthiness. . . . In my time, we never actually admitted anyone. . . . My personal dealings were limited to Catholics. I later learned that others—Protestants, Mormons, and Jews—were denied any sanctuary on the consulate grounds. . . . Non-Catholic Americans were directed to the British Consulate, which both sponsored other religious services and admitted much larger numbers of Catholics. But the U.K. services were full, leaving most American worshippers only the option of holding services on Saudi territory, thereby exposing themselves to potentially violent attack from the *Mutawa* [the much-feared Saudi religious police].¹⁰

JEWS

With Jews, the issue is not freedom of religious practice in Saudi Arabia; it is simply gaining entry to the Kingdom. In several instances over many years, agencies of the U.S. government have excluded Jewish Americans from positions in Saudi Arabia. Hunter explains that a protocol prohibiting Jews being assigned to the Kingdom was signed by the U.S. Embassy in Jeddah and the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as a result of which the State Department avoids sending Jewish employees to reside in Saudi Arabia.¹¹ Select senior diplomats

of Jewish origin may briefly visit the country on official business but “no low or mid-level Jewish-American diplomat was permitted to be stationed/reside in Kingdom” during Hunter’s three-year experience. He writes:

When [in 1993] I worked in the Washington, DC State Department administrative office of the ‘Near East and South Asia Bureau’, it was the duty of the foreign service director of personnel to screen all Foreign Service officers applying for service in KSA [Kingdom of Saudi Arabia] and to ‘tick’ Jewish officers’ names using the letter ‘J’ next to the names so that selection panels would not select Jewish diplomats for service in KSA.

I was instructed that there was a diplomatic protocol between the USA and KSA going back ‘many years’ in which the two governments agreed that no Jewish-American U.S. diplomats would be allowed to be stationed in KSA. The KSA government had expressed its opposition to the stationing of U.S. diplomats who were Jewish because it believed all Jewish people, irrespective of nationality, can be considered Israeli spies. I was told that the U.S. government had not disputed the KSA government’s assertion. I explained to the State Department’s Office of the Inspector General that the existence of such a protocol was an indication of illegal activity since no treaty provision may be executed without the concurrence of the U.S. Senate.¹²

The consequences of the U.S. government’s boycott of Jews has on occasion come to light. Congressional hearings in 1975 exposed the fact that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and its

⁹On Hunter, see Martin Edwin Andersen, “Whistle-blowers keep the faith”, *Insight*, February 11, 2002.

¹⁰Hunter, “Appeasing the Saudis”, *Middle East Quarterly*, (March 1996).

¹¹Letters to the author, June 24 and 25, 2002.

¹²Letter to the author, June 9, 2002.

subcontractors excluded Jewish (and black) personnel from projects in Saudi Arabia.¹³ The Treasury Department issued guidelines in 1976 to help U.S. businesses get around anti-boycott provisions just signed into law. More recently, to prepare its defense in a case brought against it by the Boeing Corporation, the U.S. government hired a Virginia-based contractor, CACI Inc.-Commercial, to send a team to microfilm documents in Saudi Arabia, a task that would take several months. At a November 1991 meeting called by the Air Force, Col. Michael J. Hoover, the chief trial attorney for the Air Force Materiel Command, informed representatives of the Justice Department and CACI Inc.-Commercial that Jews or people with Jewish surnames could not go to Saudi Arabia as part of the microfilming team. On this basis, David Andrew (the senior CACI Inc.-Commercial employee involved in the microfilming project) drafted and Jane Hadden Alperson (Office of Litigation Support, Civil Division, Justice Department, the case manager involved in the microfilming project) edited an "operations plan" in which the "Screening/Selection Process" included the following text:

No Jews or Jewish surnamed personnel will be sent as part of the Document Acquisition Team because of the cultural differences between Moslems and Jews in the Region. . . . No Israeli stamped passport, as per Saudi rules.

As the Justice Department and CACI Inc.-Commercial hired the team to go to Saudi Arabia, "At least one U.S. person was refused a place on the team based on religion or national origin."

After hearing a complaint from the Anti-Defamation League, the Office of Antiboycott Compliance at the Department of Commerce conducted a probe lasting (the unusually long period

of) one and a half years. The office reached a settlement on February 27, 1997, in which CACI Inc.-Commercial and the key individuals in each institution (Hoover, Alperson, Andrew) agreed to settle the allegations against them. The individuals were assessed suspended fines and CACI INC.-Commercial paid \$15,000. Hoover also received a letter of reprimand. For their part, the Air Force and the Department of Justice "agreed to institute measures to prevent a similar event from happening again."¹⁴ To all this, the *New York Daily News* acerbically commented, "The Air Force and Justice apologized and promised to abide by the law. That's comforting, since Justice is supposed to uphold the law."¹⁵

As in the case of women, where the government leads, private organizations follow. Excluding Jews may be in contravention of U.S. law, which states that "U.S. companies cannot rely on a country's customs or local preferences and stereotypes to justify discrimination against U.S. citizens", but it occurs nonetheless.¹⁶ Until

¹³Steven Emerson, *The American House of Saud: The Secret Petrodollar Connection* (New York: Franklin Watts, 1985), p. 70.

¹⁴Office of Antiboycott Compliance, Department of Commerce, "CACI/USAF/DOJ/Hoover/Alperson/Andrew." For another case that was not litigated, see *Journal of Commerce*, March 7, 1997.

¹⁵*New York Daily News*, March 10, 1997.

¹⁶Jordan W. Cowman, "U.S. companies doing business abroad must follow U.S. and host country labor and employment laws", *New Jersey Law Journal*, August 4, 1997. Of course, such cases arise in other countries, too. "A subsidiary of the Manitoba Telephone System, MTS, became embroiled in a controversy in the 1980s when it became known one contract stipulation for upgrading the Saudi telephone system required the exclusion of Jewish MTS employees." *The Gazette* (Montreal), February 7, 2001.

1959, the Arabian American Oil Co. (ARAMCO) had an exemption from New York State's anti-discrimination laws and was permitted to ask prospective employees if they were Jews, on the grounds that Saudi Arabia refused to admit Jews into the country. When this arrangement was challenged in 1959, the New York State Supreme Court derisively condemned this practice. It told ARAMCO, "Go elsewhere to serve your Arab master—but not in New York State", and instructed the State Commission against Discrimination to enforce the ruling against ARAMCO.¹⁷

World Airways, which boasts of having "pilgrims from more Muslim countries to the Islamic Holy Land than any other airline in the world", was charged in 1975 with demanding a "letter from a church showing membership, or proof of baptism or marriage in a church" from staff traveling to Saudi Arabia.¹⁸ About that same time, Vinnel Corporation excluded personnel with any "contact or interest" in countries not recognized by the Kingdom.¹⁹

In 1982, two cardiovascular anesthesiologists (Lawrence Abrams and Stewart Linde) brought charges of discrimination against their employer, the Baylor College of Medicine, for excluding them from an exchange program with the King Faisal Hospital in Saudi Arabia due to their being Jewish. The case went to court, and in 1986 the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit agreed with the doctors, finding that "the college intentionally excluded Jews from its beneficial and educational rotation program at Faisal Hospital." The court surmised that Baylor's actions were motivated, at least in part, "by its desire not to 'rock the boat' of its lucrative Saudi contributors."²⁰

OTHER ISSUES

The Federal government appeases Riyadh when it "meticulously cooperate[s] with Saudi censorship" of mail going to

Americans living in the Kingdom:

Mail to U.S. military and official government personnel enters the Kingdom on U.S. military craft, and American officials in Saudi Arabia follow Saudi wishes by seizing and disposing of Christmas trees and decorations and other symbols of the holiday. They seize and destroy Christmas cards sent to (the mostly non-official) Americans who receive their mail through a Saudi postal box, and even tear from the envelope U.S. stamps portraying religious scenes.

It hardly comes as a surprise, then, to hear from Ron Mayfield, Jr., who worked in Saudi Arabia for eight years with the Army Corps of Engineers, ARAMCO and Raytheon Corp, that while he was working at Raytheon, the mail censors confiscated a photo of his grandmother on her 95th birthday, given that this picture contravenes the (episodic) Saudi prohibition of representations of women. More broadly, Mayfield recounts:

On my first tour of Saudi Arabia, working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Americans were ordered to remove all decals and photos of the American flag. . . . With my last employer, providing defensive missiles to the Saudis, officers came through on an inspection and ordered removal of all family photos picturing wives and female children. . . . Customs went through a friend's wallet, confiscating a photo of his wife in hot pants.²¹

The Jeddah office of what used to be called the U.S. Information Service, an agency charged with presenting the offi-

¹⁷19 Misc. 2d 205; 190 N.Y.S.2d 218; 1959 N.Y. Misc.

¹⁸Emerson, *The American House of Saud*, p. 69.

¹⁹*Ibid.*

²⁰805 F.2d 528; 1986 U.S. App.

²¹*Roanoke Times*, February 17, 2002.

cial American point of view and refuting hostile accounts, was “almost completely staffed by non-U.S. citizens from the Middle East, many of them not friendly to American values and policies”, according to Hunter. It “made no effort to counter the systematic, widespread falsehoods in the Saudi media about American society. In some instances, in fact, the USIS actually provided misinformation about U.S. society.”²² The public library at USIS did not stock books critical of the Kingdom or other volumes considered “too sensitive” for Saudi society (such as family health issues). The only books touching on Jews, he reports, were “a small Jewish cookbook” and a great number of anti-Semitic tomes, including the *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*.²³

The U.S. government’s weak policy can be seen in yet other areas: It does not fight for U.S. scholars or media to get access to the Kingdom; it does not challenge the Saudi refusal to allow American researchers to engage in archaeological excavations; and it provides scant assistance to those unfortunate Americans who get caught up in the Saudi legal system (for something as minor as a fender-bender).

In contrast—and this is a rich subject in its own right—the State Department and other agencies bend over backwards for the Kingdom, for example, going to great lengths to keep secret the specifics of its investments in the United States. And when Saudi nationals living in the United States get in trouble with the law (common charges include various forms of rowdiness, sexual harassment and keeping slaves), they are often granted diplomatic immunity to avoid prosecution, then whisked out of the country. For example, a former U.S. ambassador to Riyadh was dispatched by his Saudi bosses to Miami in April 1982 to keep a Saudi prince from being jailed for an altercation with the

police by winning him retroactive diplomatic immunity. After Princess Buniah al-Saud, a niece of King Fahd, faced charges of battery for having pushed her Indonesian maid down a flight of stairs in her Orlando, Florida house, the maid was conveniently denied a visa by the State Department to return to the United States to testify against the princess. More spectacular was the planeload of bin Ladens permitted to leave the United States immediately after September 11, 2001, before U.S. law enforcement officials could question them.

It bears noting, too, that although these examples are limited to individuals and do not touch directly on high policy, they have more than symbolic importance because they set a tone with potentially large implications. In effect, the U.S. government is abetting a profound challenge to American ways by the Islamic mores of Saudi Arabia. McSally, the fighter pilot, explains that putting her in an *abaya*, requiring that she be escorted and placed in the back seat, has a real psychological effect on military life at U.S. bases in Saudi Arabia, implying that women are inferior and subservient to men.²⁴

Large-Scale Obsequiousness

THE SAME obsequiousness that exists on the level of the small-bore and the personal also holds on the grander scale of international politics. Some examples:

- *Oil production and embargo*: Saudi energy policies in 1973–74 helped cause the worst economic decline since the Great Depression; it was met with appeasement and conciliation, without so

²²Hunter, “Appeasing the Saudis.”

²³Letter to the author, June 24, 2002.

²⁴*Washington Post*, January 1, 2002.

much as a whisper of bolder action.

•*Lack of cooperation in finding killers of Americans:* American officials meekly accepted in 1995 that the Kingdom executed the (dubious) suspects accused of killing five Americans in Riyadh before U.S. law enforcement officials could interrogate them. A year later, the response was similarly mild about the lack of Saudi cooperation in investigating the murder of American troops at Khobar Towers. After 9/11, it was even worse; as one observer puts it, “The Saudis’ cooperation with our efforts to track down the financing of Al-Qaeda appears to be somewhere between minimal and zero.”²⁵

•*The spread of militant Islam:* “Saudi money—official or not—is behind much of the Islamic-extremist rhetoric and action in the world today”, notes Rep. Ben Gilman (R-NY), then chairman of the House International Relations Committee.²⁶ The assault on September 11, 2001 was basically Saudi in ideology, personnel, organization and funding—but the U.S. government did not signal a reassessment of policy toward Riyadh, much less raise the idea of suing the Saudis for punitive damages.

•*Militant Islamic institutions in the United States:* U.S. authorities have been lax about the funding of these organizations. Only in March 2002, for example, did Federal agents finally get around to raiding 16 innocuous-looking Saudi-funded institutions, such as the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences of Leesburg, Virginia. This problem is widespread and unredressed, as a newspaper editorial from Canada suggests:

[M]any terrorists and terror recruits get their first taste of death-to-the-West Islamic extremism from a Wahhabi imam or centre director in Virginia or London or, presum-

ably, Hamilton or Markham [towns in Canada], whose paycheque is drawn in the Saudi Kingdom. It may not be necessary to add Saudi Arabia to the Axis of Evil, or to invade it. But it will be necessary to engage the Saudi spread of extremism if the war on terrorism is to be won.²⁷

•*Arab-Israeli conflict:* The Bush Administration has pretended that the Abdallah Plan for solving this conflict is a serious proposition, when it is not just patently ridiculous (demanding that Israel retreat to its 1967 borders) but also offensive (clearly envisioning the demographic overwhelming of Israel). Instead of playing unconvincing diplomatic games with Riyadh, the administration should emphasize that the hateful rhetoric and subsidies for suicide bombers must come to an immediate end.

•*Human rights and democracy:* The usual U.S. commitment to these goals seems to wither when Saudi Arabia is involved. The Kingdom’s signed commitments to protect the rights of its subjects are virtually ignored, as are such questions as the rule of law, freedom of speech and assembly, the right to travel, women’s rights and religious liberties.

•*Absorbing insults and threats:* A famous case, dating from the 1970s, when Henry Kissinger attended a state dinner in his honor hosted by King Faisal, set the tone. Kissinger recounts how the king informed him that

Jews and Communists were working now in parallel, now together, to undermine the civilized world as we knew it. Oblivious to my [Jewish] ancestry—or delicately putting me

²⁵Michael Barone, *U.S. News & World Report*, June 3, 2002.

²⁶Associated Press, May 22, 2002.

²⁷*Edmonton Journal*, May 31, 2002.

into a special category—Faisal insisted that an end be put once and for all to the dual conspiracy of Jews and Communists. The Middle East outpost of that plot was the State of Israel, put there by Bolshevism for the principal purpose of dividing America from the Arabs.

Kissinger did not confront Faisal but did his best to avoid the whole issue by responding with a question to the king about the palace artwork.²⁸

More recently, Crown Prince Abdallah wrote to President Bush in August 2001 stating that

a time comes when peoples and nations part. We are at a crossroads. It is time for the United States and Saudi Arabia to look at their separate interests. Those governments that don't feel the pulse of the people and respond to it will suffer the fate of the Shah of Iran.²⁹

This aggressive statement was met not with reproach but with appeasement. And in April 2002, a leading Saudi figure warned that to survive, the Kingdom would contemplate joining with America's worst enemies: If reason of state requires that "we move to the right of bin Laden, so be it; to the left of [Libya's ruler Muammar] Qaddafi, so be it; or fly to Baghdad and embrace Saddam like a brother, so be it."³⁰ The statement appeared prominently in the U.S. press but had no apparent repercussions on policy. More striking yet are the reports from the summit meeting that followed indicating that Abdallah warned Bush that if he won nothing substantive regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict, "our two countries will go their separate ways."³¹

A Matter of Give and Take

WHAT LIES behind this pattern of obsequiousness? Where is the normally robust pursuit of U.S. interests? It is one thing when private companies bend

over backwards to please the Saudis (Starbucks in Saudi Arabia does not show the female figure that normally graces its logo), but why does the U.S. government defer to the Kingdom in so many and unique ways?

"Oil" is likely to be the most common explanation proffered, but it does not hold. First, the U.S. government has never cringed before any other major oil supplier as it does to Saudi Arabia. Second, U.S.-Saudi ties have been premised since 1945, when a dying Franklin D. Roosevelt met an aging King Ibn Saud, on an enduring bargain in which Riyadh provides oil and gas to the United States and the world and Washington provides security to Saudi Arabia. Because this deal has even more importance for Saudis than Americans—survival versus energy supplies—oil cannot explain why the U.S. side has consistently acted as a supplicant.

Another possible factor is the proclivity of many Americans to strive to tolerate other people's customs and religious beliefs, which in the Saudi case involves such matters as the total covering of women, public executions and the absence of any pretense of democratic rule. But the lack of reciprocity from the Saudi side, decade after decade, suggests that something else besides an open spirit is at work; no matter how liberal, no one can endure such a one-sided relationship for so long unless there is a payoff.

A hint of that payoff lies in the pre-emptive quality of some U.S. government measures. Note two cases: The requirement that female military personnel wear the *abaya* was imposed by Americans, not Saudis; the latter did not even raise the

²⁸Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1982), p. 661.

²⁹*Wall Street Journal*, October 29, 2001.

³⁰*New York Times*, April 25, 2002.

³¹Confidential sources, April 2002.

subject. Saudi law only requires Westerners to dress conservatively, not to wear Saudi garb. Likewise, the investigation of the Air Force-Justice-CACI directive excluding Jews from Saudi Arabia found “no evidence that the restriction was specifically requested by, was required by, or was even known by the Government of Saudi Arabia.”³²

The same behavior exists among private institutions. Again, note two cases: In the 1959 ARAMCO case, it turned out that the oil company was not compelled by the Saudi government to exclude Jews, but did so anyway as a result of what the court termed “informal statements of State Department underlings.”³³ Similarly, the judgment regarding the Baylor College of Medicine found that while college officials informed the two Jewish doctors of problems securing visas for Jews, “Baylor never attempted to substantiate that ‘problem’”, leading the court to doubt “the veracity of those assertions.” The court also found no evidence supporting the college’s contention that the aversion to Jewish doctors in Saudi Arabia “represented the actual position of the Saudi government.” To the contrary, it concluded that Michael E. DeBakey, the school’s renowned chancellor, failed to obtain “an authoritative statement of the position of the Saudis” until 1983, more than a year after the doctors had initially filed suit. The court observed that there was “no evidence that Baylor even attempted to ascertain the official position of the Saudi government on this issue.”³⁴

In all four cases, an American in a position of authority overeagerly imposed regulations he imagined the Saudis would be pleased with—but without checking with them, much less being required to take these particular steps. Why does such a pattern of behavior exist? What could prompt government or hospital staff to run out ahead of the Saudis themselves?

The Saudi ambassador to the United

States, Prince Bandar bin Sultan, helpfully hinted at an answer in a statement boasting of his success cultivating powerful Americans. “If the reputation then builds that the Saudis take care of friends when they leave office”, Bandar once observed, “you’d be surprised how much better friends you have who are just coming into office.”³⁵ This effective admission of bribery goes far to explain why the usual laws, regulations and rights do not apply when Saudi Arabia is involved. Hume Horan, himself a former U.S. ambassador to the Kingdom, is the great and noble exception to this pattern. He says this of his former colleagues:

There have been some people who really do go on the Saudi payroll, and they work as advisers and consultants. Prince Bandar is very good about massaging and promoting relationships like that. Money works wonders, and if you’ve got an awful lot of it, and a royal title—well, it’s amusing to see how some Americans liquefy in front of a foreign potentate, just because he’s called a prince.

Over-the-top support of Saudi interests by former Ambassador James E. Akins (who has criticized Arab governments for not being tougher with Washington and despaired that Arabs did not withdraw their money from U.S. banks) has caused him to be described as occasionally appearing “more pro-Arab than the Arab officials.”³⁶

Several surveys of the post-government careers of ex-U.S. ambassadors to Riyadh all raise eyebrows. Steven Emerson characterizes their behavior as

³²Office of Antiboycott Compliance, Department of Commerce.

³³19 Misc. 2d 205; 190 N.Y.S.2d 218; 1959 N.Y. Misc.

³⁴805 F.2d 528; 1986 U.S. App.

³⁵*Washington Post*, February 11, 2002.

³⁶Emerson, *The American House of Saud*, p. 250.

“visceral, overt self-interested sycophancy.”³⁷ *National Review* finds that the number of them “who now push a pro-Saudi line is startling” and concludes that “no other posting pays such rich dividends once one has left it, provided one is willing to become a public and private advocate of Saudi interests.”³⁸ A *National Post* analysis looked at five former ambassadors and found that “they have carved out a fine living insulting their own countrymen while shilling for one of the most corrupt regimes on Earth.” If you closed your eyes while listening to their apologies, “you would think the person talking held a Saudi passport.”³⁹

A *Washington Post* account gives some idea of the nature of the “rich dividends” reaped by former officials:

Americans who have worked with the Saudis in official capacities often remain connected to them when they leave public office, from former president George H.W. Bush, who has given speeches for cash in Saudi Arabia since leaving office, to many previous ambassadors and military officers stationed in the Kingdom. In some cases, these connections have been lucrative. Walter Cutler, who served two tours as the U.S. ambassador in Saudi Arabia, now runs Meridian International Center in Washington, an organization that promotes international understanding through education and exchanges. Saudi donors have been “very supportive” of the center, Cutler said. [Edward] Walker, the former assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs, is president of the Middle East Institute in Washington, which promotes understanding with the Arab world. Its board chairman is former senator Wyche Fowler, ambassador to Riyadh in the second Clinton administration. Saudi contributions covered \$200,000 of the institute’s \$1.5 million budget last year, Walker said.⁴⁰

Nor is this a new problem. Many ex-

Washington hands have been paid off by the Kingdom, including not only a bevy of former ambassadors but also such figures as Spiro T. Agnew, Jimmy Carter, Clark Clifford, John B. Connally and William E. Simon.⁴¹

The heart of the problem is an all-too-human one, then: Americans in positions of authority bend the rules and break with standard policy out of personal greed. In this light, Hunter’s report on the three main U.S. government goals in Saudi Arabia begins to make sense: strengthen the Saudi regime, cater to the Saud royal family, and facilitate U.S. exports. All of these fit the rubric of enhancing one’s own appeal to the Saudis. So, too, does Hunter’s comment that “the U.S. mission is so preoccupied with extraneous duties—entertainment packages for high-level visitors, liquor sales, and handling baggage for VIP visitors”—that it has scant time to devote to the proper concerns of an embassy. Likewise, his long list of high-profile ex-officials who visited Saudi Arabia during his sojourn (Jimmy Carter, George McGovern, Colin Powell, Mack McLarty, Richard Murphy) and “who were feted and presented with medals and gifts at closed ceremonies with the Saudi monarch” also fits the pattern.⁴²

This culture of corruption in the Executive Branch renders it quite incapable of dealing with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the farsighted and disinterested manner that U.S. foreign policy

³⁷Ibid., p. 263.

³⁸Rod Dreher, “Their Men in Riyadh”, *National Review*, June 17, 2002.

³⁹Matt Welch, “Shilling for the House of Saud”, *The National Post*, August 24, 2002.

⁴⁰*Washington Post*, February 11, 2002.

⁴¹Emerson, *The American House of Saud*, chaps. 7, 13, 19.

⁴²Hunter, “Appeasing the Saudis.”

requires. That leaves Congress with the responsibility to fix things. The massive pre-emptive bribing of American officials requires urgent attention. Steps need to be taken to ensure that the Saudi revolving-door syndrome documented here be made illegal. That might mean that for

ten years or more after having extensive contacts with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, an official may not receive funds from that source. Only this way can U.S. citizens regain confidence in those of their officials who deal with one of the world's more important states. □

A Poet's Pessimism

The city won for Allah from the Giaour,
The Giaour from Ottoman's race again may wrest;
And the Serai's impenetrable tower
Receive the fiery Frank, her former guest;
Or Wahab's rebel brood who dared divest
The prophet's tomb of all its pious spoil,
May wind their path of blood along the West;
But ne'er will freedom seek this fated soil,
But slave succeed to slave through years of endless toil.

—George Gordon, Lord Byron,
Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, II.lxxvii



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Bullish on Democracy

Research Notes on Multinationals and the Third Wave

—Minxin Pei & Merritt Lyon—

ONE OF THE most contentious issues in globalization is the international social responsibility of investors—mainly multinational corporations (MNCs)—in industrialized democracies. To be sure, the debate over how (and if) these investors can simultaneously pursue profits and global public goods has a long and contentious history, as anyone who remembers the publication of Richard Barnett and Ronald Müller's *Global Reach* in 1974 knows. However, as the pace of globalization accelerates (yes, it is, by the way, despite 9/11), and the backlash against globalization gains political momentum, the ethical role of international private investors has again become a divisive controversy. That controversy, which generally pits the business community against an array of international non-governmental organizations, is fueled most often by specific incidents: high-profile investment projects in countries with poor human rights record, revelations of child labor and sweatshop abuses, and allegations of environmental damages attributed to foreign corporations. Public outrage, abetted by a media generally inclined against business, is often followed by calls for

consumer boycotts or other political sanctions against the offending firms.

Over time, the accumulation of such incidents has encouraged a widespread perception that multinational corporations are irresponsible global citizens who care only about fattening their own bottom lines. Conventional wisdom even among the more knowledgeable public (and some academics) holds that MNCs, guided by profit-maximizing strategies, flock to authoritarian regimes capable of repressing demands for economic justice and the costs of meeting environmental standards.¹

But despite the prevalence of such views, there is almost no empirical evi-

¹See Anita Chan and Robert A. Senser, "China's Troubled Workers", *Foreign Affairs*, (March/April 1997), pp. 104–17; Stephen Hymer, "The Multinational Corporation and the Law of Uneven Development", George Modelski, ed., *Transnational Corporations and World Order* (New York: W.H. Freeman, 1979), p. 386; Herman Daly, *Beyond Growth: The Economics of Sustainable Development* (New York: Beacon Press Books, 1997); and Daly, "Fostering Environmentally Sustainable Development: Four Parting Suggestions for the World Bank", *Ecological Economics* 10 (1994), pp. 183–7; Raymond Vernon, "Transnational Corporations: Where are They Coming From, Where are They Headed?" *Transnational Corporations* 1, 2 (August 1992),

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dence that any of this is true. Indeed, a growing body of research suggests instead that foreign direct investment (FDI)² is generally beneficial to developing countries, creating the socioeconomic conditions conducive to the improvement of human rights and environmental quality in host countries.³ Several studies indicate that MNCs, particularly those based in open societies, find that it makes better business sense (and enhances profitability) to “export human rights” and to implement stricter environmental regulations in the developing world. An empirical study of the relationship between foreign direct investment and human rights has produced evidence that FDI is associated with *more* political rights and civil liberties in developing countries.⁴

Similarly, a growing body of research shows that MNCs are *not* engaged in an environmental race to the bottom. Instead, scholars have found a strong connection between corporations’ environmental performance and superior *financial* performance, and that global environmental standards and strict compliance may *increase* the market value of compliant firms in developing countries.⁵ Others have found a link between environmental management and stock performance through both tangible economic influences and what has been termed the “reputation effect.”⁶ Still, other studies have found a strong correlation between environmental performance and profitability at the firm level.⁷ In other words, MNCs may actually be *more* environmentally responsible than local competitors.⁸

CAN THE same be said for democratization? Are MNCs good for the political quality-of-life of the countries in which they invest? Our evidence, based on examining FDI patterns following democratic regime transitions in 23 countries since the mid-1970s, indicates that FDI investors—

mainly MNCs—have been far more socially responsible, even virtuous, than many have supposed.⁹ FDI investors have quickly embraced new democracies immediate-

pp. 7–35; Stuart L. Hart and Gautum Ahuja, “Does it Pay to Be Green? An Empirical Examination of the Relationship Between Emission Reduction and Firm Performance”, *Business Strategy and the Environment* 5, 1 (1996), pp. 30–7.

²Following the IMF, we define FDI as the flow of investment capital into “the reporting country.” This includes “equity capital, reinvested earnings, other capital, and financial derivatives associated with various inter-company transactions between affiliated enterprises.” FDI also “reflects the objective of obtaining a lasting interest by a resident entity in one economy in an enterprise in another country.” The minimum requirement is “10% ownership” and “some control” over internal management.

³Kathleen Pritchard, “Human Rights and Development: Theory and Data” in David Forsythe, ed., *Human Rights and Development* (New York: Macmillan, 1989), p. 329.

⁴William H. Meyer, “Human Rights and MNCs: Theory versus Quantitative Analysis”, *Human Rights Quarterly* 18 (1996), pp. 368–97.

⁵Glen Dowell, Stuart Hart, and Bernard Young, “Do Corporate Global Environmental Standards Create or Destroy Market Value?” *Management Science* (August 2000), pp. 1059–74.

⁶Robert D. Klassen and Curtis P. McLaughlin, “The Impact of Environmental Management on Firm Performance”, *Management Science* (August 1996), pp. 1199–214.

⁷Mark Cohen, Scott A. Fenn and Jonathan Naimon, *Environmental and Financial Performance* (Washington: IRRC, 1995).

⁸Gunnar Eskeland and Ann E. Harrison, “Moving to Greener Pastures? Multinationals and the Pollution Haven Hypothesis”, *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 1744* (Washington: World Bank, 1997).

⁹The 23 countries are: Argentina, Benin, Bolivia,

ly following a regime transition; overall, the evidence shows a significant increase in FDI within the three years of regime transition compared with the three-year period prior to transition. FDI investors' confidence in new democracies has played an important role in the consolidation of many democracies since the late 1970s. Unlike international portfolio investors, who can exit a country at the tap of a few computer keys, FDI investors cannot quickly liquidate their investments (mostly factories and equipment). Ironically, the illiquidity of FDI thus becomes a better measure of foreign investors' confidence in the long-term prospects of a given country than portfolio investments. Rising FDI investments in new democracies represent a form of economic endorsement by international investors. Such endorsement seems to carry weight, too; a striking feature of the Third Wave transitions is that no new democracy has been subsequently toppled by an economic crisis.

But how, and why, have MNCs aided democratic transitions? In theory, the prospects of the establishment and consolidation of democratic institutions should bolster the confidence of FDI investors for two reasons. First, as a general rule, private property rights are more secure in democracies than autocracies. This is because the power of the government in a democracy is more constrained, not just by electoral mechanisms and presence of opposition parties, but also by courts. Second, democratic institutions may offer long-term peaceful solutions for social and ethnic conflicts, thus contributing to political stability. In several countries, such as El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua, democratic transitions also brought to an immediate end long-running civil conflicts.

But matters are not nearly so simple. Clearly, most political benefits of democratization may be realized, if at all, only

when new democratic institutions become consolidated and mature. In the short-run, the benefits are often elusive. Indeed, FDI investors face unusually high economic risks when they invest in newly democratized nations, and these risks are often compounded because the disruptions engendered by political transition often occur within a context of macroeconomic crises that almost invariably result from the mismanagement of the previous regime.¹⁰ FDI investors must also brace themselves for high political risks in new democracies. Political fragmentation and national disintegration are real possibilities, particularly in multiethnic societies

Brazil, Central African Republic, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Ghana, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, South Korea, Spain, Thailand, Turkey and Uruguay. Of the 81 electoral democracies born between 1974 and 2000, 71 resulted from transitions from authoritarian rule. However, FDI data for a number of countries do not exist. The former Soviet bloc countries had little or no FDI prior to their revolutions in 1989–91. Nine island nations that became democratic were tiny economies with no recorded FDI. Our sample includes countries for which FDI data in the periods before, during and after regime transition are available. This represents coverage of 52 percent of the new democracies that were comparable destinations for FDI (defined in terms of politically unrestricted access to FDI both prior to and after democratic transitions).

¹⁰Of the 23 countries studied, 65 percent were coping with serious inflation during the three years leading up to the transition. Hyperinflation (averaging over 100 percent) was observed in two countries, very high inflation (between 20 and 100 percent) in nine, and high inflation (10–20 percent) in four. Only 30 percent were experiencing moderate-to-high rates of growth; in fact, growth was negative in nine countries and stagnant to slow (0–3 percent) in seven.

where ethnic minorities often view the downfall of the old regime as an opportunity to break away completely—Indonesia offers a recent example of such a phenomenon as does the Chechen uprising against post-Soviet Russia. Most critically, many new democracies face enormous challenges in developing effective governing capacity in a short period of time. For FDI investors, negotiating with poorly coordinated bureaucracies in a new democracy can often be a nightmare—and the specter of a restoration of the old guard can hang over the proceedings, as well.

If such risks abound, why then do FDI investors show such confidence in democratizing countries and in new democracies? Part of the answer is that their confidence is selective and nuanced. Analysis of FDI flows shows that investors have been highly discriminating in reacting to pending regime changes. Generally speaking, and as common sense would suggest, FDI has been most likely to increase in countries that were evolving gradually and peacefully toward democratic rule (such as South Korea, Spain, Chile and Thailand), but has tended to flee pre-transition countries that were at war (Argentina in 1982), experienced a sudden decrease in stability (Panama in 1987–88; the Philippines in 1983–84), or suffered hyperinflation (Brazil in 1983–85).¹¹

On the other hand—and much less obviously—democratic transitions seem to whet FDI investors' appetites for high-pay-off risk. In 18 of the 23 newly democratized countries we studied, total FDI in the three-year post-transition period rose dramatically over a similar three-year period prior to the transition.¹² The magnitude of increase was also large—in excess of 100 percent in all but one country. The aggregate amount of FDI for the 23 countries as a group was \$26.6 billion in the three-year period following transition, about \$8.2 billion more than the total

amount of FDI in the three-year period prior to the transition—an increase of 45 percent.¹³ Clearly, FDI in post-transition countries gained importance as a significant source of capital formation.¹⁴

Remarkably, such rapid rises in FDI took place in generally unfavorable macroeconomic environments. In the three-year period after transition, inflation remained very high (over 20 percent a year) in twelve countries while growth was stagnant or negative in eleven countries; macroeconomic trends were favor-

¹¹On average, nine countries in our 23-country sample reported drops in FDI in the two years prior to the transition year, while nine countries reported falling FDI in the transition. Most year-on-year decreases in FDI, however, tended to be large in percentage terms (over 30 percent). About ten out of 26 instances of falling FDI were below 30 percent.

¹²If FDI rose in countries like Spain, South Korea, Chile and Thailand before they were democracies, one might expect that this would tend to depress the statistical increase in FDI after transition. Logic suggests that the smoother the democratization process, the smaller the FDI delta before and after transition, but the more abrupt the process, the greater the FDI delta. Some might conclude that the delta, by itself, can be misleading as an indicator, and needs to be seen in the context of other measures, like the total share of FDI investment a country attracts in given economic sectors. But the number of so-called smooth transitions is too small to test the proposition.

¹³This result was skewed by a large fall of FDI (about \$1.8 billion) in Brazil in the three-year post-transition period. Excluding Brazil, the net increase of FDI would have been \$10 billion, or 81 percent.

¹⁴In the three-year pre-transition period, the average FDI/GDP (foreign direct investment to gross domestic product) ratio in the sample countries was 0.46 percent; this ratio rose to 1.147 percent in the three-year post-transition period.

able (characterized by falling inflation and rising growth) in only seven countries. This suggests that, in general, short-term macroeconomic risks do not deter FDI investors from increasing their investments in new democracies.

There are exceptions, however. FDI investors have been particularly averse to sending capital to post-transition countries struck by hyperinflation.¹⁵ They also have tended to shun countries where regime transition was inconclusive and the old guard retained a strong presence in the government—for example in Russia, Ukraine or Belarus. In addition, countries that risk further disintegration following a democratic transition do not seem to attract FDI. (Post-Suharto Indonesia and Russia immediately following the Soviet collapse are apt examples.) Generally, those newly democratized countries with large economies and bright growth prospects (Spain, South Korea, the Philippines and Chile) were favored destinations of FDI and received, in absolute terms, more FDI than smaller and slow-growing economies.¹⁶

While FDI investors usually give new democracies the “benefit of the doubt”, longer-term FDI flows—flows beyond the three-year transition period—depend mainly on the institutional health of destination countries. Regression analysis of the relationship between FDI, political risk and various macroeconomic indicators (inflation and GDP growth) shows that political risk has been more significant than macroeconomic performance as a determinant of FDI flows to new democracies four to eight years after regime transition. Indeed, political risk is more statistically significant eight years after transition than four years after, indicating the increasing influence of post-transition institutional development on FDI investment decisions. In other words, phony or shaky new democracies cannot expect to keep FDI investors

happy—at least not many or for very long.

FDI versus Official Assistance

THE PROMOTION of democracy has long been, at least in official rhetoric, a key foreign policy objective of nearly all Western governments. Transitions from authoritarian rule to democracy in the developing world are treated as strategic opportunities to enlarge the global community of democracies, particularly so after this past September 11. In many instances, Western governments have greeted such regime transitions with expressions of political support and pledges of financial assistance. On the basis of official pronouncements, it is thus easy to form the impression that fragile new democracies, usually born under adverse economic circumstances, must rely on the generosity of Western governments to put their economic house in order.

The reality, however, is quite different. The data show that official development assistance (ODA) to new democracies has played a much smaller role in injecting fresh financial resources into those countries than has FDI. Despite the rhetoric, net flows in ODA to newly democratized regimes in the three-year post-transition period in our sample *were actually negative*. At the aggregate level,

¹⁵Brazil and Bolivia—the two countries that saw a decline of FDI in the three-year period after transition—experienced severe hyperinflation (averaging 333 percent a year in Brazil and 4,680 percent a year in Bolivia). In Argentina, which had average annual inflation rate of 435 percent in the three-year post-transition period, FDI remained stagnant.

¹⁶FDI in these four countries in the three-year post-transition period accounted for nearly half of all the FDI made in the sampled countries.

the total amount of ODA to the 22 countries (excluding Spain, for which ODA data were not available) in our sample in the three-year period after transition actually *fell* by \$103 million from the three-year period prior to transition. This was in sharp contrast to the net increase of \$3.6 billion in FDI in the same period for the same countries.¹⁷ Private FDI flows to these countries rose by 45 percent in relative terms, and exceeded total ODA funds by a third.¹⁸ This suggests that, as a group, Western governments are less regime-sensitive and bullish on new democracies than private FDI investors.

Analysis of ODA data raises other intriguing issues. Western governments tended to increase ODA to those newly democratized countries torn by civil war or leftist insurgencies. For example, Central American countries (El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras) saw some of the largest increases in their ODA after they became democratic in the mid-1980s. In the three-year post-transition period, they received \$2.5 billion—12 percent of total ODA flows to new democracies in the three-year post-transition period. The same pattern held in the Philippines, where the huge increase in ODA (from \$1.27 billion to \$2.38 billion from the three-year pre-transition period to the three-year post transition period following the overthrow of the Marcos regime in 1986) took place for strategic reasons. Thus, ODA was used primarily as a policy instrument to bolster newly-elected pro-Western governments that faced serious political challenges, not as a humanitarian or economic policy tool.

That ODA serves political and strategic rather than humanitarian and economic considerations seems confirmed by the data from Africa. Poor African countries that had received the bulk of ODA (about half of the total ODA in our

sample) prior to their democratization saw a large drop in ODA during their transitions to democracy in the early 1990s. Five of the six African countries (Central African Republic, Ghana, Malawi, Mali and Mozambique) saw a net *decrease* of \$1.6 billion in ODA in the three-year post-transition period as compared to the three-year pre-transition period. FDI in the same five countries showed a net *increase* of \$755 million in the same three-year post-transition period. If we include data from east European countries following the collapse of communism in the former Soviet bloc, we find additional empirical evidence that ODA flows are generally determined by strategic interests rather than the recipients' humanitarian needs or any strictly economic criteria.¹⁹ This pattern suggests that ODA is not an effective financial vehicle to support new democracies that emerge in countries considered strategically marginal to the West—unless the United States and others change their approach to foreign

¹⁷The total amount of ODA in the three-year pre-transition period in our sample was \$19.98 billion, about \$3.34 billion more than the amount of FDI in the same period. But the total amount of ODA in the three-year post-transition period was \$19.88 billion, virtually unchanged from the three-year pre-transition period, but \$2.04 billion *less* than the FDI in the same period. The net decrease of ODA relative to FDI was \$5.38 billion.

¹⁸Democratic transitions brought increased ODA to 13 countries but reductions in nine countries; but those reductions outweighed the increases in absolute terms.

¹⁹In the three-year period following the transitions in eastern Europe, ODA flows to Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Czechoslovakia amounted to \$10.61 billion (slightly less than the \$10.68 billion in FDI flows to the same countries in the same period).

assistance, as they have recently promised to do. We will see if, and how, that promise is kept.

The Democracy Exception

IN THE CASE of supporting new democratic regimes, FDI investors appear to have pursued private profit and provided global public goods at the same time. This raises an obvious question: If FDI investors could be socially responsible in one case, might they extend their virtues into other areas such as labor rights and environmental production? Probably not: A set of unique circumstances surrounding democratic transitions has enabled FDI investors to do good while trying to do well, but it may be impossible to reproduce these circumstances for the production of other types of global public goods. Three arguments support such a conclusion.

First, the production of a social good in developing countries receiving external aid or investment requires not only outside funds, expertise and other types of assistance, but the cooperation and commitment of the indigenous political leadership. Where such cooperation and commitment is lacking, external aid is likely to be ineffective.²⁰ In most instances, democratic transitions signal the resolve for change and reform by the indigenous political elite. In the short-term, the new ruling elite's commitment to political and economic reform may also appear to be strong and credible. All else equal, these two factors are likely to sway FDI investors to favor newly democratized countries in their investment decisions because these signals represent new *political*, rather than economic, opportunities to reduce the risks of their capital.

Second, FDI investment in newly democratized countries is different from other forms of "socially responsible

investing." There is practically no opposition to FDI investment, either in the host or the source countries, because it does not directly pit one interest group against another. In other forms of socially responsible investing, however, investment outcomes seldom can make all stakeholders happy. For example, explicit investment decisions affecting labor rights or environmental standards unavoidably create enemies either in the business community or among groups defending labor rights and the environment. Political controversies in host and source countries poison the investment climate, often to such an extent that MNCs may decide to abandon their plans altogether, ultimately hurting all stakeholders involved.

Third, FDI in new democracies also appears to have avoided one pitfall often experienced by other forms of socially responsible investment: manipulation by host-country governments. MNCs are fierce competitors internationally for new markets and investment opportunities, and such competition allows host country governments to play one MNC off against another in extracting the most favorable terms (especially when such countries enjoy competitive advantages such as market size and possession of valuable resources). More important, in the absence of a united front among MNCs (wouldn't that be collusion?), socially responsible investment is practically impossible because host countries will invariably offer more flexible terms to competing bidders in order to get the proffered capital. Some authoritarian regimes—such as China, Iran and the former Soviet Central Asian republics—have become quite deft at this game, much to the frustration of human rights advocates. By comparison, few

²⁰See Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Hilton L. Root, "The Political Roots of Poverty", *The National Interest* (Summer 2002).

extraneous social conditions get attached to FDI investments in newly democratized countries, thus leveling the playing field for everyone.

Clearly, FDI investors in new democracies do best for themselves and for the host countries when they are able to operate under the political radar screen, avoiding the politicization of their business efforts. Nor is anyone's interest generally served by trying to raise that profile. In the case of explicitly "socially responsible" investment, businesses making one socially responsible investment decision should expect to be asked to make others. Those MNCs that allow themselves to be portrayed as capitalist defenders of freedom may be called upon to intervene in human rights, labor standards and other contentious issues in their host countries, which is an honor most MNCs could—and will—do without. Asking too much of MNCs can lead ultimately to their doing too little.

EVEN THOUGH the unique conditions responsible for channeling rising FDI to new democracies are unlikely to be reproduced for making MNCs more socially responsible in other areas, the bullishness shown by FDI investors on new democracies is good news. MNCs can be responsible global citizens as long as their operating environment is neither politicized nor polarized. At the same time, Western governments should re-examine aid policies that are inconsistent with official rhetoric, inadequate relative to the needs of new democracies and stingy compared with private sector efforts. International non-governmental organizations may also benefit from learning that multinational corporations may have done good while doing well in the developing world; such knowledge may help them to make allies out of a group that has been unfairly and counterproductively vilified in the debate on globalization. □

Of Boldness

This is well to be weighed; that boldness is ever blind; for it seeth not danger, and inconveniences. Therefore it is ill in counsel, good in execution; so that the right use of bold persons is, that they never command in chief, but be seconds, and under the direction of others. For in counsel, it is good to see dangers; and in execution, not to see them, except they be very great.

—Francis Bacon

End of an Affair?

Immigration, Security and the U.S.-Mexican Relationship

—Robert S. Leiken—

THEY SEEMED made for each other. Taking office side by side as “compassionate conservatives”, George W. Bush and Vicente Fox were united by more than a hankering for cowboy boots and ranching. President Bush was eager to demonstrate his familiarity with at least one foreign country and to utter entire phrases in Spanish. Intimacy with Vicente Fox also promised Latino votes, a blooming constituency (and possibly a decisive one in the 2004 election). Besides, “San Vicente” was the first feel-good story of the new millennium, conquering the 71-year crusty authoritarian rule of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) and sweeping into office on a wave of reform sentiment. For Fox, Bush held countless charms, none more shimmering than the hope of an immigration accord that could relieve pressure on the economy, charm Mexico’s human rights and nationalist constituencies, and endear Fox to migrants who are influential with voters back home.

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The two former governors, their political interests converging, thus seemed poised to grasp the nettle of Mexican migration. In February 2001 Fox got to host the new U.S. President’s first foreign trip, a bouquet previously reserved for Canada. Bush brought handsome gifts to Fox’s ranch in Guanajuato: immigration was placed atop the bilateral agenda, an honor hitherto reserved for drugs. Bush also proposed a top-level bilateral migration commission comprised of Secretary of State Colin Powell, Attorney General John Ashcroft, and their Mexican counterparts, Jorge Castañeda and Santiago Creel. The offer was accepted and the commission was empowered to work out a bilateral migration agreement.

The Mexicans soon showered the fledgling Bush Administration with memoranda advocating and defining the “regularization” of Mexican immigration: more green cards, amnesty of illegals, a temporary worker program, border safety. Meanwhile, Fox barnstormed key Latino constituencies, calling on Washington to “get real”, and Castañeda told a cheering AFL-CIO that President Bush must accept “the whole enchilada [i.e., including amnesty] or nothing.”

The promise of an immigration accord, in turn, served partisan U.S. aspirations. It appealed to low-wage businesses wishing to “match willing workers with willing employers”, to use

Bush's phrase. An impressive coalition in favor of a Mexican immigration agreement took shape, as a bidding war between Democrats and Republicans commenced. The "chips" in that war were illegal Latino aliens to be certified for full or "partial" amnesty. Both parties recognized that a Mexican immigration deal had the support of all the usual immigration "players", including ethnic lobbies and labor unions (the latter now counting on immigrant workers for most of its new recruits).

Bush brought the tall stranger home to meet the folks at his first White House state dinner. In that one dizzying week before September 11, 2001, Fox got to address a joint session of Congress, join the President on a swing through the Midwest, and bask in a flood of American political and media attention unprecedented for a Latin American head of state. The Mexicans were swept off their feet. However, party elders sitting on Republican back benches, scandalized by talk of a new amnesty for Mexican immigrants, were already frowning at this liaison. Their disapproval would break with full force after September 11.

Left at the Altar

SEPTEMBER 11 intruded rudely on the budding U.S.-Mexican romance like an uninvited witch at a wedding. To many Americans, immigration, which had seemed only to dish out gentle and inexpensive gardeners and nannies, suddenly appeared dangerous. Immigration was now viewed through the somber lens of homeland security, as vulnerability stared at us from every airport, bridge, chemical and nuclear plant, water system, computer terminal, salad bar and unopened envelope. Even benign Canada, across a far less problematic border, held horrors.

Then the bad news broke on our

heads that the organizations assigned to shield us were not up to the job. One after another they were implicated and fell into disrepute: airport security, the FAA, the Transportation Department, the FBI, the CIA and the NSA. But for sheer incompetence the INS was peerless, capable of dispatching student visa notifications to hijackers six months after they had plowed into the New York City skyline. With such an agency we would "regularize" millions of illegal immigrants? Meanwhile, Border Patrol officers were forsaking their poorly paid and daunting work for jobs as air marshals.

After 9/11 Bush had a mission that took him away from his personal passions. He turned to old comrades, Britain and Canada. Now his newest new friend was Vladimir Putin. Mexico, however, refused to play the patient Griselda. When Foreign Minister Castañeda championed America's "right of reprisal" and vowed that Mexico would not "haggle" over its loyalty, Mexico's media, intellectuals, old-line politicians and influential left-wing erupted. The Senate, led by the erstwhile ruling party, called for Castañeda's scalp. Santiago Creel, the fiery foreign minister's chief rival in Fox's quarrelsome cabinet, insinuated that Castañeda was acting as a stooge for the Americans. Fox fell uncharacteristically silent. Friendship with Bush was now exacting a price as the Fox Administration failed to grasp, as Tony Blair did instantly, the sea change in the American public and their politics.

The Top Level Talks on migration, as they were called, were put off; when they eventually resumed the Americans insisted on devoting them to shoring up the border, not legalizing Mexican migrants. Fox complied, thinking Bush would come around with time. But when the presidents next met at an international meeting in Monterrey, Mexico in March 2002, the body language was noticeably different and the immigration dowry had gone

missing. Bush, courtly and evasive, said the deal would come *mañana*.

The reason is instructive. In anticipation of the Monterrey meeting, Bush sincerely wished to provide a token of his esteem to Fox. The administration thus lobbied the Congress to reinstate section 245(i) of the immigration code. Section 245(i) applies to foreigners who are already illegally residing in the United States when their immigrant visas or “green cards” become available. Under the program they may pay a \$1,000 fine and “adjust their status” in the United States, rather than return home to obtain the visa at an American consulate. (Generally, these illegal aliens are relatives of settled immigrants who have sponsored their admission.) The measure aroused strong opposition from House Republicans, led by the restrictionist Immigration Reform Caucus, whose membership had swelled after 9/11. Senator Robert C. Byrd (D-WV) placed a hold on the program in the Senate, echoing the argument of House Republicans that the program was an “amnesty for hundreds of thousands of illegal aliens, many of whom have not undergone any background or security check.” But the 245(i) program is but a partial mini-amnesty. It would only apply to about 200,000 of the nine million foreigners in the United States, and it merely permits them to undergo background security checks by the INS in the United States instead of having to undergo security checks by the State Department’s consular service in their country of origin.

The strength of congressional opposition to such a mild measure startled the White House and led it to realize how deeply 9/11 had interred the U.S.-Mexican immigration agenda. The prospects of a real “amnesty”, which would legalize four million Mexican migrants just for starters, was now beyond the political horizon. Clearly, the mood had shifted. In one national poll after

September 11, more than 80 percent concluded that the United States had “made it too easy” for foreigners to enter the country;¹ in another, 77 percent said the government was not doing enough “to control the border and screen people.”

In Mexico the atmosphere had also darkened, albeit for other reasons. Fox had lost control of the political agenda. At their meeting in Guanajuato, Bush’s historic mission was ahead, but Vicente Fox’s great achievements were already behind him. The Bush team earned notoriety for its loyalty and discretion; Fox’s for the opposite. Well before 9/11, too, an increasingly recalcitrant Mexican Congress had trashed Fox’s pledges to modernize the economy. It had balked at opening to private investment an inefficient and corrupt energy sector that retards development; nor would it improve an obsolete tax code that allows widespread evasion; nor would it repeal antiquated “revolutionary” labor laws that hamper investment. Meanwhile, Fox’s pledge to boost economic growth had been whipsawed by the American recession and the departure of numerous *maquiladora* export plants for greener pastures in lower-wage China. For the Mexican electorate, then, Fox’s inability to produce an immigration agreement was but the latest in a set of unfulfilled promises.

With Fox’s domestic program in disarray, foreign policy came by default to be seen as the one arena in which Fox, along with his energetic foreign minister, had put his stamp—swinging Mexican policy toward the United States and pulling away from its traditional defense of sovereignty against all other claims, including human rights. It would be a mistake to minimize the significance of what they undertook. Mexican “realism” under the PRI meant bucking the United States on

¹Cited in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 20, 2001.

(mainly symbolic) political issues (Cuba, Central America, arms control) while working quietly with the United States just enough to keep it from denouncing the PRI's corrupt dynasty. Mexico sided with the Third World against the superpowers, the South against the North, and championed expansive and stern views of national sovereignty and non-intervention. Mexico led opposition to U.S. interventions in Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Grenada and Panama; supported the socialist government in Chile; voted for a UN General Assembly resolution condemning Zionism as racism; and became Cuba's staunchest backer in the Western Hemisphere.

That was the backdrop when, in Fox's first heady days, Castañeda renounced the central tenet of Mexico's anti-interventionist doctrine. The former Communist Party militant offered a lucid critique of the position that human rights are internal matters shielded by national sovereignty. "The exercise of sovereignty", Castañeda said, "cannot be used as an excuse to justify any violation of rights." Promoting respect for human rights is incumbent on all governments and "cannot be contingent upon the will of a single government." This revision was enunciated in the course of Mexico's campaign to persuade Latin American countries to condemn Cuban human rights violations, a campaign that left Castañeda and the Cuban foreign minister trading insults.

As it happened, however, these foreign policy novelties could not withstand the pressure that built up in Mexican political life in the aftermath of 9/11. In retrospect, the new departure in Mexican foreign policy reached its acme this past spring, when Mexico voted to censure Havana on human rights grounds. In the face of concerted criticism from Mexico's Cuban lobby, the Left and the PRI, that audacious act appeared to exhaust Mexico's new foreign policy vocation. To sustain such a

bold foreign policy departure in Mexico's new democratic political culture—in which the media and the parties figure prominently—Fox needed a success. He and Castañeda had counted on a bilateral immigration accord with the United States for that purpose and when 9/11 postponed progress, Fox could not sustain his innovation in Mexican diplomacy.

The first sign that Fox would be unwilling, or unable, to go to bat for his relationship with Bush occurred in April, when the Mexican Senate, still dominated by the former ruling party, refused permission for Fox to travel to the United States. Just as Bush's experience with the section 245(i) affair had taught him his new limits, so Fox got his own message. By the summer it was Fox himself who was canceling trips to the United States—once over the "human rights" of a Mexican migrant executed in Texas and once over water disputes. Mexican foreign policy had returned to its old basis—an adjunct to domestic politics with an anti-American logo. As in the days of the PRI, Fox used foreign policy for symbolic purposes while also employing it for domestic politics—in this case the eminently vote-grabbing cause of the Mexican migrant.

The Cabo San Lucas Break-up

WHEN, AS part of their foreign policy renovation, Fox and Castañeda lobbied to obtain the Latin American seat on the UN Security Council in early 2001, the furthest thing from their minds was that, in the new Council's first major debate, the Mexicans would cross Bush over what the latter regarded as an existential issue. But the debate on Iraq in the UN Security Council unfolded in the autumn of 2002 as if designed by the gods to administer the final blow to the Bush-Fox romance.

Fox was not prepared to take on both

the dinosaurs and the Left to support the United States—still less so when such support would offend traditional Mexican pacifism, an exotic outgrowth of a bloody revolution and one of the hemisphere's most violent and crime-wracked societies. Indeed, traditional revolutionary Mexico had always looked to France as its foreign policy, as well as intellectual and cultural, mentor. During the Cold War the two prided themselves on forging "a third way" between the superpowers. They conspired famously against U.S. policy by backing the rebels in El Salvador, a policy Jorge Castañeda had worked with the Elysées palace to fashion. When France initially opposed the United States on Iraq in the Security Council, the smart money was on Mexico's siding with France against the United States—and indeed, Mexico's UN representative embraced France's objections to a U.S.-sponsored resolution in which Iraqi violations of a new inspection regime would trigger automatically a U.S.-led military response.

The break-up came on October 25, when Bush traveled to Mexico for an APEC meeting in Cabo San Lucas. The Mexicans had eagerly looked forward to the APEC meeting because it provided a setting for the presidents to talk of bilateral concerns. The Mexicans made it clear in advance that they wanted the meeting to signal a revival of immigration talks, with the United States indicating what it was prepared to do and when. But Bush was focused on Iraq. The United States expected Mexico to be "an easy vote", one official told the *New York Times*. But Fox was not willing to back an unpopular war with Iraq without an immigration *quid pro quo*. After what Mexican officials privately described as "a dialogue of the deaf", the *Washington Post* observed that the two leaders "were unsmiling, sat far apart and barely looked at each other." To add insult to injury, Bush rejected Fox's invitation to visit Mexico early next year. The idea, Fox

said, would be to use the tenth anniversary of the North American Free Trade Agreement to undertake a sweeping, high-level review of U.S.-Mexican relations and sketch out "a big vision of where we want to go." "Maybe we'll be at war", Bush replied.

The *Wall Street Journal*, a passionate backer of an immigration accord with Mexico, was indignant:

It's one thing for a Mexican president to cede his foreign policy to the left for some blather about global poverty. But helping the French block the U.S. in the Security Council, and on a matter of vital national interest, is something Americans won't soon forget. As a publication that has worked long and hard to promote American understanding of and sympathy for Mexico, we fear that the progress we've made in this cause may be wiped out at a stroke.

No U.S. newspaper item in recent memory has been quoted more in Mexico than this editorial, often out of context. The paranoid conclusion of a leading Mexican columnist echoed an opinion devoutly held in traditional circles, that "the insults and even threats in this editorial . . . obviously were promoted by some agency of the Bush government." A Mexican official told the *Washington Post* that "Bush is today a different person" from the *amigo* who met with Fox in Guanajuato and the White House: "The man who once made Mexicans feel relaxed and welcome now makes them nervous and often irritated. The Mexicans find Bush, once easygoing and open, now tough and single-minded."

In the end, at the November 8 vote, Mexico joined the other 14 members of the Security Council in supporting a compromise resolution. The Mexicans prided themselves on having acted as useful go-betweens, but the administration view was less flattering. If trouble arises in a second Security Council vote to authorize

the use of force, the Bush Administration cannot count on Mexican support for its point of view. It will not be "an easy vote."

Remaining Friends

IF THEIRS was a tragedy of star-crossed lovers destroyed by the wars around them, what got sacrificed in the Bush-Fox version of the story was not the protagonists but their idea of a new era of friendship between the two countries. None of the protagonists willed this outcome. What happened was a foreign policy collision of domestic political forces suddenly moving in opposite directions. Now it is time to pick up the pieces and see what can be salvaged.

The Bush-Fox intimacy always transcended personal chemistry and reflected the structural convergence between the two countries stemming from economics and demographics. Mexico has become the second-leading trading partner of the United States, on course to overtake Canada within a decade. Mexico is already the top export market for both California and Texas. Mexico's most dynamic sectors, such as those that produce high-tech electronic components, are linked to the U.S. market and U.S. capital. Eventually, too, Mexican energy supplies could make a substantial contribution to solving California's electrical power crisis. The 2,000-mile border between the two countries is the world's most heavily trafficked. Nearly two out of every three U.S. Latinos is of Mexican origin, and the Latino population, at 35 million, has already overtaken African-Americans as America's largest minority.

These facts ensure that the end of the Bush-Fox affair will not spell the end of intimacy between the United States and Mexico. The task for the two administrations is to establish a mode of cooperation based on convergent national,

not personal or political, interests. These interests include not only security and the consolidation of the rule of law in Mexico, but also expanding trade, curtailing drug and alien smuggling, energy cooperation, labor market flows, and protecting the environment and water resources, to name a few.

President Bush continues to insist that Mexico is "our most important bilateral relationship." Politics and gallantry aside, Mexico's integral value for America has grown, not diminished, since 9/11. In fact, 9/11 has unexpectedly consecrated an entirely new basis for U.S.-Mexican cooperation, one undreamed of by the principals of the Top Level Talks before September 2001: homeland security.

While a comprehensive immigration deal has passed beyond reach for the present, U.S. and Mexican leaders can still make significant progress at less ambitious levels. Such progress can help both leaders with key political constituencies and allow them to ease what is, and is otherwise likely to remain for many years, the worst irritant in the bilateral relationship. Before laying out what such progress could entail, we need a better feel for the problems facing both sides.

SOUTH OF THE BORDER

In American eyes, the unwieldy U.S.-Mexican frontier now represents a security threat more than a divergence in immigration or economic policy. But the fact is that, for a variety of practical reasons, it is not so easy to draw strict distinctions between the two. The first point is obvious: With thousands of autonomously functioning terrorists having received training in Al-Qaeda camps, the United States can no longer afford the "luxury" of a southern border so loosely controlled.² While illegal migrants from

²For the security implications of an immigration agreement, see my report, *Enchilada*

Mexico may themselves pose no security threat, the same networks and routes employed by unregistered entrants into the United States could easily be used by terrorists. Moreover, the mere fact that there are nine million “undocumented” aliens residing in the United States (of whom nearly half are Mexicans) creates a market for fraudulent documents that serves terrorists as well as construction workers and maids. Indeed, several of the 9/11 hijackers obtained valid state licenses with phony identity documents from illegal immigrants.

There are other problems, too. Most illegal aliens now employ the services of professional smugglers. Several smuggling rings transport migrants from the Middle East across the Mexican border, and at least one is suspected by the U.S. government of having terrorist ties. Ideally, too, a visa applicant from, say, Lebanon’s Bekaa Valley who is unwelcome in the United States should also be unwelcome in Mexico. Mexico’s air, land and sea borders are now vital to U.S. security, as is the competence and probity of Mexican migration, border and police forces. The lack of security at Mexico’s southern border with Guatemala has also taken on new importance in the wake of September 11.

But if our Mexican worries have grown absolutely, they have diminished in relative terms. The Mexican border troubles us more today, but the same may be said for all our air, land and sea borders. Thanks to longstanding anxieties about drugs and illegal aliens, the Mexican border inherits stricter Border Patrol supervision than the Canadian border, even though there appear to be a great many more terrorist-prone Islamists lurking to our north. Moreover, as Mexican officials have reminded their American colleagues, terrorists and weapons of mass destruction are more likely to arrive by sea than from

Mexico—air travel, not wading the Rio Grande, has proved the avenue of choice for Al-Qaeda. The 48 Islamists implicated in terrorist plots in the United States since 1993 have used a wide array of means to enter the country, but few if any of them crossed the Mexican border or were Latin American citizens.³

The danger from the Mexican border must be viewed in the context of our general border crisis and our capacities to cope with it. The INS clearly lacks the personnel and resources to undertake major new programs designed to regularize either the flow of migrants across the border or the status of millions of undocumented Mexicans inside the United States. We now expect the INS to check all foreign visitors, track foreign students, fingerprint and photograph those arriving from countries of national security concern, review myriad asylum cases, and apprehend more than 300,000 visa-overstayers who have failed to obey explicit court orders to leave the country. These expanded mandates are testing a teetering INS at a time when it is slated to undergo not one but two reorganizations: relocation from the Justice Department to a new Homeland Security Department; and division into two separate agencies. Even well-run agencies are invariably disrupted by reorganizations as new missions, lines of authority and operational routines get established; and, of course, the INS is not a well-run agency.⁴

Lite: A Post-9/11 Mexican Migration Agreement, Center for Immigration Studies (www.cis.org), March 2002.

³Steven A. Camarota, *The Open Door: How Militant Islamic Terrorists Entered and Remained in the United States, 1993–2001* (Washington, DC: Center for Immigration Studies, 2002).

⁴The INS’s reputation as the archetypal blundering, antiquated bureaucracy is well deserved. But if one asks how the INS arrived at such a state of disarray, surely part of the answer is that for

Institutional incapacity represents by far the most serious U.S. immigration policy problem. It is a problem so huge that it simply takes the air out of the room whenever proposals to legalize millions of illegal aliens are raised. If it can reduce a portion of our danger, a Mexican immigration deal deserves a place on the homeland security "to do" list. But the plain fact is that the U.S. government could not implement its part of any such arrangement until a reformed INS within a functioning Department of Homeland Security comes into being. Thus practicality joins politics to suggest that this is not the hour for a comprehensive agreement on immigration.

What the United States can and should do, however, is to return to the incremental bilateral policy that was moving ahead nicely before Messrs. Fox, Castañeda and Bush galloped into town. That policy will now inevitably focus more on security, and it will of necessity involve changes in immigration patterns and routines on both sides of the border. But while the balance of concern may have changed, the basic components of enhanced cooperation remain the same: reducing illegal immigration, bolstering border security, and streamlining the safety and speed of commercial transactions.

Without any legislature having to pass any major new laws, we can make important progress toward a "smart" U.S.-Mexican border. After 9/11 the crush at the Mexican border thickened, with long lines and lengthy inspections. But security precautions can be an incentive to modernization rather than a prescription for stagnation. The border needs to get slender and "smart", with fewer border checks because goods and travelers will have been pre-cleared. Most cargo can be inspected on loading docks before packing it into sealed containers outfitted with sensors to register any tampering. A smart border will require public-private collabo-

ration between customs officers and merchants in order to reduce inspections for authorized senders, receivers and carriers. Travelers willing to undergo background checks would be awarded smart visas bearing tamper-proof biometric data. As their bearers sail past the border in fast lanes, migration authorities could devote their energies to scrutinizing those without such visas. The number of inspections actually carried out on the border would shrink while traffic expanded. While this will not require new laws, it will require significant investments. For that, the administration may need to help legislators in the United States to connect the dots between enhanced border control and adequate support for it.

Border security can be smarter, as well, but here the burden falls mainly on Mexico, both as a matter of policy and attitude. The U.S. Border Patrol has already all but shut down the major illicit routes into big cities like San Diego and El Paso, as well as border jumping towns such as Douglas, Arizona. As a result, the illegal migrant flow has slowed over the past year. However, the remaining traffic has shifted to remote and dangerous areas, abetted by smuggling rings. The "success" of new U.S. methods is thus exacting a substantial toll in Mexican lives, yet it also points the way to a solution. Mexico should place these dangerous zones off-limits and purge them of smugglers. Combined with what the

three decades it has had to cope with a wave of Mexican migration without precedent in its quantity, length and significant illegality. Congress contributed to the INS's problems by consistently underfunding it even as it passed laws that added to its burdens. Congress is right, however, to ask whether very high levels of immigration, legal and illegal, are consistent with effective security precisely because they cannot help but overwhelm our administrative capacity.

Border Patrol is already doing, that effort could make the border secure.

Mexican negotiators have expressed a willingness to take these politically hazardous steps if their “undocumented” nationals can become legal U.S. residents in sufficient number. But a genuine Mexican assumption of responsibility in thwarting illegal migration would also require Mexico to relinquish the pretense that the United States is wholly liable for the unhappiness of those entering its territory illegally. For years Mexican politicians have endorsed an expansive reading of the “human rights” of illegal Mexican migrants in order to reap benefits from a popular and poignant cause. They have deflected their own responsibility onto a neighbor whose success stands as a reproach. The foundation of a principled discussion of this matter is contained in the appraisal of Mexican political commentator Sergio Sarmiento: “Perhaps the signal manifestation of the decades-long failure of our political economy”, he wrote, “is the fact that millions of Mexicans risk their lives to cross the border to attain a decent living standard.”⁵

Casting the blame on Washington for the desperation of illegal Mexican migrants smacks of bad faith on other grounds, as well. As President Fox himself has recognized, the abuses most feared by Mexicans who travel illicitly across the border are those inflicted by corrupt Mexican authorities. Traveling Mexican roads in December with a brown face and U.S. plates can invite a brutal shakedown by local police eager to help themselves to the bounty of American goods that migrants bring home to their families. Even more hazardous is the fate, at those same hands, of Central American migrants transiting Mexico.

NORTH OF THE BORDER

Consistency and honesty are required of the United States, as well. As long as

we remain ambivalent about Mexican immigration, we must share responsibility for the illegal aliens who fill the jobs that American firms offer. An effective post-9/11 border policy must therefore include stricter interior enforcement by the U.S. government, and that will mean sanctioning employers who hire illegals. (It also ultimately may lead to a national identity card, but that is another subject, and another argument.)

Interior enforcement, however, must be combined with regularization. The movement of Mexicans to the United States is a vast institutionalized social phenomenon, the product of more than half a century of continuous migration from an adjoining country. Even if it were possible, sealing the border would mete out wrenching pain to innocents and massively disrupt social networks and economic activity. So what to do?

One popular proposal to regularize Mexican migration is a temporary worker program large enough to cover the current flow of illegal Mexican migrants. However, temporary worker programs have almost invariably proved costly, difficult to administer, and illusory in the sense that the workers end up staying permanently. If we decide, nevertheless, to institute a temporary worker program, it should start as an experiment in a few selected states. A more viable alternative might be simply to increase Mexican green cards until 2015, when Foreign Minister Castañeda claims Mexican migration will “peter out” because of declining fertility rates and increased domestic economic growth. Accordingly, the number of additional visas can be decremental, decreasing each year until 2015. By that year the quota of Mexican visas (75,000, down from 250,000) would constitute the totality of Mexican migra-

⁵Sarmiento, “Mexicanos”, *Reforma*, September 18, 2000.

tion to the United States. Even in the likely event that Castañeda's prediction proves optimistic, by then, with Mexican cooperation, we will have built a border no longer as vulnerable to alien smugglers.

Dealing with those Mexican migrants who will enter the United States in the future is only part of the problem, however. The larger and more difficult issue has to do with those roughly four million already in the United States illegally. Proposals for legalization (or amnesty) applies to these four million. But like proposed temporary worker programs for future migrants, legalization of those already here represents a burden the INS is not now prepared to handle. Yet in the long run, there is no other solution from the standpoint of both security and equity. The United States, of all countries, cannot abide a burgeoning class of alien residents, a reincarnation of the *metic* class that toiled without rights in ancient Athens. Though immigrants in their vast majority pose no threat, Americans would be safest if all immigrants were accounted for, including those here illegally. However, the United States ought not reward with amnesty those who broke its laws to get here, lest it encourage more illegal immigration, weakening the rule of law in both countries.

One solution would be to pair earned legalization with workplace sanctions. Such a solution could point a course between deportation (which is administratively, politically and economically ruinous) and amnesty. By participating in a point system, unauthorized migrants could earn a permanent visa and, eventually, American citizenship. Points would be earned for integrating into American life—holding a steady job, residing



Vicente Fox and George W. Bush in August 2000

responsibly in a community, staying on the right side of the law, learning English, and studying American history and civic values. Participants would not be eligible for means-tested government benefits. Those wishing to become legal would also pay a fine for having entered illegally. Should a pilot temporary worker program be established, they would enter that program for a stipulated number of years.

The requirements of earned legalization would have to be sufficiently stringent to discourage future illegal immigration. Thus, the program must be linked not only to Mexican border responsibility but also to strictly enforced employer sanctions. Those sanctions should be directed against employers breaking the law, not workers organizing in self-protection. Under a regime of employer sanctions, unauthorized migrants not applying for earned legalization would be rejected for their next job. Barred from all government benefits, they would have no recourse but to return to Mexico. The illegal population would be compressed by a combination of earned legalization and departure. That would be the best solution to a problem with no easy answers, but, as indicated above, it is one that must await the streamlining of the

INS and the consolidation of the Homeland Security Department.

Over the long run, the United States and Mexico must work to turn Mexican immigration from the chaotic, dangerous, habitual and illegal to the regulated, safe, selective and legal. This will involve sacrifices from both sides. The post-9/11 U.S. Congress will not approve a migration agreement that does not secure the border. The Mexican Congress will not accommodate American security concerns without the legalization of the Mexican "undocumented." In the meantime, the United States will have to face up to the security dimensions of a large illegal population.

Mexico does not see migration as a long-term answer to its economic problems, and Washington knows that law enforcement cannot be the main solution to illegal Mexican immigration. The final component of an immigration bargain with Mexico, then, must encompass the economic development of what are now "sender" communities in central and southern Mexico, providing jobs at home for those prone to migrate. The United States and Mexico have begun to convene private donors and non-governmental organizations in a "Partnership for Prosperity" to raise productivity by encouraging infrastructure and education investments in those zones. But the key to the development of sender regions lies in Mexico's opening its energy sector to private investment, revamping its educational system, and finding a way to control corruption without paralyzing the government. (It is in that new context, too, that trade frictions between the two countries should ultimately be brokered.) This is not something the United States can do for Mexico, but the Fox Administration has invited U.S. assistance in the building of an independent and impartial judiciary

and effective law enforcement that itself obeys the law. Helping to establish the rule of law in Mexico is a U.S. security and demographic interest.

A RESPECTABLE showing in Mexico's midterm elections, scheduled for July 2003, for Fox's National Action Party could salvage the remaining three years of the Fox Administration. That opens more than a six-month window, following the U.S. midterm elections, through which President Bush could extend a hand to his old sidekick by moving forward incrementally on immigration. Fox should easily grasp why a comprehensive agreement on immigration is not currently practical. After all, institutional incapacity is a reality he knows well from his administration's efforts to fight drug lords and build the rule of law.

Domestic politics cannot be expunged from the international policy of any democracy, but the basis for a successful and sustainable bilateral migration policy cannot be either partisan politics or personal affection. In retrospect, President Bush's early privileging, politicizing and personalizing relations with Vicente Fox exposed the impulses of a campaigner and a foreign policy novice. It would be unfair to weigh that false start on the scales of September 11, but there is nothing untoward in reminding ourselves that national interest will usually prove a firmer foundation for U.S. policy than looking into the eyes of petitioning peers. In the case of Mexico, whose economic future lies in integration with the United States and whose political future lies in liberal democracy, that interest is clear. It is just as clear for a United States that finds itself in need of a Mexico governed by laws, not men. □

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Working Out

—George W. Grayson—

WITH LESS than four years left in his term, Mexico's President Vicente Fox looks increasingly like a lame duck. To his credit, he has brought honest people into government, cracked down on narco-trafficking, backed a freedom of information act, and quieted the Zapatista guerrillas in southern Chiapas state. Still, a medley of factors—poor relations with Congress, an inability to set priorities, a quixotic management style, intramural cabinet fights and spillover effects from a sluggish American economy—have contributed to the deadlock and drift that beset his administration.

But even as Fox slogs through a political quagmire, a basketball-playing labor leader, a law-and-order impresario and a Rocky-like SWAT team commander have shown that change can be accomplished at the state level. This unlikely trio has transformed the state of Sinaloa from a narco-dealer's paradise to a magnet for entrepreneurs. As a result, this carrot-shaped province hugging the Gulf of California in northwest Mexico has attracted, as of November 2002, 227 new businesses, totaling more than \$700 million in investment since 1999. While much of the country has remained bogged down in a

protracted recession, sun-baked Sinaloa has led the nation in job creation during the first quarter of this year and attained the number-one ranking among 31 states for slashing red tape. Who are the men responsible for this turnabout? How have they achieved so much despite a disquietingly high murder rate and an abundance of corruption and narco-clans? Does Sinaloa's experience hold any lessons for the rest of Mexico or for the developing world in general?

The Politico

CHANGES BEGAN in the state of Sinaloa soon after basketball *aficionado* Juan S. Millán Lizárraga swore the gubernatorial oath nearly four years ago. A former announcer who worked his way to the top of the Radio Workers' Union, the indefatigable Sinaloan became a leader in the Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM), the nation's largest labor organization. Traditionally, all CTM members were automatically affiliated with the Institutional Revolutionary Party, known as the PRI, which dominated the country's politics for 71 years until opposition-candidate Fox captured the presidency in 2000. But Millán soon acquired a reputation as a maverick among the "dinosaurs" who ran the lethargic CTM. This image sprang from Millán's attempts to forge alliances

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with other labor centrals, while working with the private sector to link higher compensation to improved efficiency, productivity and quality. The pay-for-performance concept was as alien as square tortillas to union bosses who came to power within a statist, authoritarian regime that favored union shops, featherbedding, payola for CTM honchos and workplace tranquility for coddled businesses.

Millán's independent streak nearly ended his political career in 1989. With the backing of Sinaloa's labor movement, he had just completed a six-year Senate term and was presiding over the local PRI elite. With negotiations over the North American Free Trade Agreement hanging fire, then-President Carlos Salinas decided to show skeptics in the U.S. Congress that Mexico had shed its corrupt, single-party dictatorship, and Salinas cavalierly selected Sinaloa as the venue to drive home this point. Specifically, he agreed to allow the pro-Catholic, middle-class National Action Party (PAN) to "win" the mayorship of the resort city of Mazatlán. Although himself no political puritan, Millán—convinced that the PRI had won fair and square—raised unshirted hell at this Machiavellian ploy. He even proposed having the ballots re-counted publicly at high noon in the city's central plaza. When Salinas fobbed off this suggestion, Millán promptly resigned his party post. Once Salinas left office, however, Millán returned to national prominence, serving as the PRI's secretary general before winning a party primary *en route* to the Sinaloa statehouse. Even though anathema to some of CTM's diehards, Millán enjoyed organized labor's backing for the state's top spot inasmuch as it was the only governorship available to a union notable.

His labor credentials aside, Millán knew that investment was the key to raising the quality of life in this seafood- and

farming-dominated state whose personal income (\$5,800) fell far below the national average (\$9,100). Yet honest businessmen looked askance at Sinaloa because the state—which forms part of the Chihuahua-Sinaloa-Durango "Golden Triangle" for drug activities—produces an abundance of heroin poppies and marijuana and was home to many of the nation's most notorious narco clans, including Carrillo Fuentes, Arellano Félix, Caro Quintero, Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán and Ismael "El Mayo" Zambada. Some members of these families still live in heavily fortified compounds, especially in the mountainous eastern part of the state.

Contributing to these Hobbesian conditions was a lack of teamwork—even hostility—among the military and the various federal, state, and local law-enforcement agencies. As a result, Millán appealed to President Ernesto Zedillo, Salinas' successor, to order army, navy and federal authorities to collaborate with state and local police forces. This sparked the creation of the Sinaloa Central Group, chaired by Millán, that met monthly, fostered cooperation and helped reduce the murder rate. The number of homicides, which had averaged 649 annually in the six years before Millán took office, dipped in 1999 (560) and 2000 (499) before rising again after Fox's inauguration.

The Policeman

AS VEXING AS they found this bloodletting, Millán and Mexican business moguls understood that most of the killings involved drug cartels that were competing for territory, settling old scores with competitors or reaping vengeance on audacious judges. What investors feared even more than AK-47-wielding goons was the continued kidnapping of corporate executives and their family members—a crime



bled a crack team of eighty young men and women whose sole function was to prevent kidnappings and, failing that, to return the victim unharmed. FRI operatives train in part by working out; they run twenty kilometers and swim a mile and a half each day. The squad includes twelve sharpshooters and other heavies, but most of its members are wizards in computers, electronics, engineering, voice profiling, polygraphs and other technical skills—some of which they have honed in classes with Israeli and American instructors. The force provides round-the-clock security for 180 top businessmen, who reimburse the state based on their ability to pay. Several dozen executives are on the waiting list.

During Millán's first year on the job, citizens reported 37 kidnappings. Since the FRI's deployment 22 months ago, the number has dropped from thirty in 2000 to 25

in 2001—with only a handful so far this year. Nationwide, Mexico—which suffered at least 360 kidnappings last year—has endured 331 in the first eight months of 2002. Meanwhile, Comandante Simón's team has rescued every one of the victims and recovered every peso of danegeld paid. He has done so, too, without either losing a single member of his force or activating his marksmen. Before the advent of the FRI, residents often failed to disclose kidnappings, believing that the police were in cahoots with criminals. Instead, distraught families would negotiate privately with the wrongdoers. Sometimes the loved one showed up unharmed; sometimes the result was mutilation or death—and the loss of hundreds of thousands, even millions, of dollars.

This realization prompted Millán to recruit Iván Ortega Colmenares, a 47-year-old ex-Venezuelan intelligence officer who studied industrial security at Florida International University and had attended specialized schools throughout Latin America, as well as at Ft. Bliss and other U.S. facilities. Millán gave Comandante Simón, as Ortega prefers to be called, a blank check to create a Special Anti-Kidnapping Unit, also known as the *Fuerza de Respuesta Inmediata* or FRI. Over the course of several months, the muscular hawk-eyed commander with a quarter-century experience under his belt assem-

bled a crack team of eighty young men and women whose sole function was to prevent kidnappings and, failing that, to return the victim unharmed. FRI operatives train in part by working out; they run twenty kilometers and swim a mile and a half each day. The squad includes twelve sharpshooters and other heavies, but most of its members are wizards in computers, electronics, engineering, voice profiling, polygraphs and other technical skills—some of which they have honed in classes with Israeli and American instructors. The force provides round-the-clock security for 180 top businessmen, who reimburse the state based on their ability to pay. Several dozen executives are on the waiting list.

During Millán's first year on the job, citizens reported 37 kidnappings. Since the FRI's deployment 22 months ago, the number has dropped from thirty in 2000 to 25

ture to double to fifty years the prison time for this felony. When local judges treat the bad guys with kid gloves out of fear or fecklessness, the hard-charging governor asks their judicial superiors to relieve them.

The populist Millán, who visits a different school every “Civic Monday” to meet with students, teachers and community leaders, derives particular satisfaction when he can reunite a missing child with its grieving family. After being held for five days, eleven year-old Rodolfo Rochín had only two desires: freedom and a helicopter ride. Ten FRI counter-kidnapping pros answered the first wish, Millán the second. Late last February, the governor, a wide-eyed Rodolfo, and several family members and friends took to the air. A crowd of well wishers and popping flash bulbs attended their landing.

Although he assembled the FRI to grab investors’ attention and dollars, Millán has been careful to demonstrate that the unit serves the meek as well as the mighty. In August 2001, a criminal band snatched the beloved sheriff of the poor community of Escuinapa and demanded \$6,500 for his release. A gubernatorial advisor indicated that it would cost at least that sum to dispatch the FRI to this remote area. It would be more economical, he reasoned, just to help the locals raise the ransom. Millán thought otherwise on the grounds that every Sinaloan, regardless of his financial standing, deserved protection. Within twelve days, Comandante Simón and his force had rescued the sheriff (whose entire wealth consisted of six head of cattle so scrawny that they, with a seventh in tow, could have come straight from Pharaoh’s dream).

Cases like this explain why, during last year’s Independence Day parade in the state capital of Culiacán, onlookers enthusiastically cheered a police force for the first time in the history of Sinaloa—per-

haps in the whole history of Mexico. Needless to say, the hurrahs were directed toward the FRI, whose members—although they live throughout the community—wear either ski-masks or tinted face shields to disguise their identities. These accolades irritated unpopular regular police officers, who belittle the high-tech special unit as “Nintendo cops” or “galactic warriors.”

Such sour grapes notwithstanding, Comandante Simón, who disdains kidnapers as “the worst breed of cowards because they prey on children and other vulnerable members of society”, has become a local folk hero. One rescued victim named him godfather of his child; grateful families have taken newspaper ads lauding the hard-charging Millán and the low-key FRI chief; and primary-school teachers have reported their pupils saying “when I grow up I want to be like Comandante Simón.” It is probably only a matter of time before he and his squad enter the lyrics of folk songs or are featured in a TV series. The bright lights are unlikely to lure Simón away from Sinaloa, however, in part because he has married a local woman and become a Mexican citizen.

The decline in kidnappings gives FRI professionals more time to upgrade their specialties and to spread the Sinaloa model. Comandante Simón and his crew, who have earned kudos from the federal attorney general’s office, have provided training to law-enforcement agencies in a score of other Mexican states.

The Promoter

NO ONE appreciates the tough-as-nails Venezuelan native more than Heriberto Félix Guerra, Millán’s secretary of economic development, who is also vice president of the public-private Sinaloa Economic Development Council (CO-

DESIN). When requested, Ortega has heart-to-heart talks with prospective investors, including those from Japan and Korea who vividly remember the violence visited upon Sanyo, Mogami and Sharp executives in Tijuana in the state of Baja California in the mid- to late-1990s. Involving Comandante Simón when appropriate is also part of Secretary Félix's commitment to one-stop shopping for entrepreneurs. A former businessman, securities broker and chamber of commerce leader, the forty year-old Félix knows firsthand the frustrations of confronting sticky-fingered, come-back-tomorrow bureaucrats. That's why his mantra—and CODESIN's slogan—is "*Todo En Un Solo Lugar*" ("Everything in One Place").

Practically speaking, this means that a California resort mogul interested in building a luxury seaside hotel in, say, Rosario, can usually get answers to his questions and obtain all local, state and federal permits in the Government Palace in Culiacán, where all major federal agencies have offices. For most initiatives, Félix and his young staff can help the client complete the paperwork in eight hours. If complications arise, the secretary assigns a senior account executive to the investor's project. This troubleshooter, whose paycheck grows fatter with every success, will accompany the hotelier to Rosario, Mexico City or wherever there is red tape to slash. If obstacles remain, Félix himself will take charge and, as a last resort, enlist Millán to contact either a cabinet secretary or President Fox. Because the nation's chief executive belongs to the National Action Party, many PRI governors have treated him with all the kindness of Cromwell ruling Ireland. Not so the savvy Millán. He has welcomed the president to Sinaloa six times. Good personal chemistry has engendered an effective working relationship—one that ensures that government

big shots in Mexico City readily take the governor's phone calls.

Indeed, the power-point adept, tie-wearing Félix and the gregarious, open-collared Millán complement each other in winning converts to Sinaloa. The secretary crunches numbers, dispenses technical skinny and accelerates the acquisition of permits. For his part, the *bon vivant* Millán treats visitors to fist-sized shrimp, succulent steaks and delicate wines while regaling them with thrilling tales of his dealings with swag-bellied politicians and conniving union chiefs.

Eager to make the state more attractive, both men listen as much as they talk. Upon concluding one deal, Félix inquired of the new investor: "Now that all the papers are signed and we've emphasized positive things, please tell me what you find wrong with Sinaloa." Without a moment's hesitation, the client shot back, "Your airport is a museum piece." This response prompted Millán to lobby Mexico City for funds to modernize Culiacán's airport, now one of the most attractive in the country. A brand new bus terminal is a godsend for travelers seeking lower fares, and the capital's three major hospitals—one of which was the scene of the nation's first heart transplant—are undergoing improvements.

That Sinaloa is relatively far from major population centers accentuates Félix's and Millán's interest in transportation. Their offices overflow with maps showing how a few hundred miles of new highways could link the northern Sinaloan port of Topolobampo to both the country's Caribbean coast and the United States. Another projected highway arc, developed by Millán and Arizona Governor Jane D. Hull, runs from the state through the United States to Canada.

Neither Millán nor Félix courts industries that will pull up stakes the moment they can make a few more dollars offshore or in a neighboring state. Rather, they are

determined to attract enterprises that will sink roots in Sinaloa and generate new and permanent jobs for Sinaloans. This excludes footloose assembly operations. "If you want to see Mexico's past just look at Baja California and Chihuahua", Félix told me. The handsome secretary with the fervor of a true believer added that

both states suffer soaring unemployment and crime because finicky *maquiladora* owners are shifting their operations to China or Central America to take advantage of sweat-shop wages. That's not for Sinaloa. Our objective is to lead the nation's economic advancement by 2010.

CODESIN thus focuses on seven sectors: food, tourism, textiles, light manufacturing, commerce and services, software and filmmaking.

Millán's round face lights up when he mentions Citrofrut. The governor phoned entrepreneur Guillermo Zambrano, a member of one of the nation's wealthiest families, who sought a site for a state-of-the-art fruit processing plant. Zambrano, who had narrowed his search to three other states, later said, "The only reason that I even visited Sinaloa was out of courtesy to the governor." He obviously liked what he saw, and Rosario—Millán's hometown—now has 200 residents employed in an ultramodern Citrofrut facility, the biggest in North America. Nearby, construction workers are building the Estrella de Mar, an upscale Spanish-style resort.

At a time when Asian and Caribbean competitors have put the squeeze on Mexico's textile industry, the Tex Ray Group has opened a new plant in Culiacán. Its "complete package" technology—that is, the capability of turning raw thread into finished goods under one roof—provides a comparative advantage *vis-à-vis* old-fashioned producers. And Charles Dudgeon, president of Thatcher

Tubes, LLC, which is headquartered in Woodstock, Illinois, opted for relatively parochial Sinaloa over Monterrey, the dynamic, cosmopolitan capital of Nuevo León state. In explaining his decision, he said:

Monterrey embodies the present in terms of having an infrastructure and well-trained workers, but the city is beginning to face a labor shortage; in contrast, Sinaloa represents the future because it has an abundant, well-educated, and stable labor force.

Dudgeon also gave high marks to Félix's team, saying that "their promises are not just words in a glossy brochure, they really come through."

Last May 30, Millán laid the cornerstone on the Forum Culiacán, which embraces 14 movie screens, dozens of restaurants, a deluxe hotel, night clubs, Sears and other major stores, and specialty shops operated by Nine West, Liza Minelli, Perry Ellis, Levi's, Dockers and Swatch. This mega-mall, the nation's newest, will make Sinaloa's capital the shopping mecca of northwest Mexico. Like Ortega's FRI operatives, things seem to be working out.

Although vitally concerned about attracting new enterprises, Félix keeps in close touch with current corporate citizens. "How can the state assist you?", he asks. "Improved services? Better infrastructure? Job training?" Although several dozen corporations generate the lion's share of jobs and earnings, the CODESIN chief also remains attentive to small businesses. In particular, he encourages the large firms to purchase from smaller companies in the state. Millán expressed surprise when Félix balked at accompanying him on a trip to Los Angeles. "I can get more accomplished in Sinaloa—with grassroots businesses as well as with prospects—than I can in California", the secretary replied.

THE STRIDES made by Millán and his entourage have broad relevance for Mexico and other developing countries. First, the governor has articulated difficult but clear goals that address the fundamentals that citizens want from government—jobs, education, healthcare and personal safety. Second, he has assembled top aides who both share his vision and work well together, and he has given them a great deal of discretion and support to carry out their duties. Third, he has focused on meeting the needs of investors, who number among his most enthusiastic boosters. Fourth, he has built bridges—between labor and management, firms big and small, domestic and

foreign companies, the executive branch and the state legislature, and himself and the nation's chief executive. Finally, he has labored tirelessly to gain the confidence of citizens, state employees and investors.

In the four years remaining in his term, Fox could benefit from the lessons emerging from Sinaloa. So could leaders of other developing areas. While every place has its own particular problems and needs, the combination of pragmatic if not angelic leadership, personal bravery, improvements in the judicial system, a capable, coherent team and market-based economics is a formula that will help any needy region. If only it could be franchised. □

Nobel Wisdom

JIMMY CARTER: . . . what the North Koreans were waiting for was some treatment of their exalted leader with respect and a direct communication . . . I think he was quite ready. I didn't have to argue with him. When I outlined the specific points that I had been informed in Washington was the administration's position, I presented them to him. And with very little equivocation, he agreed. . . . I think it's all roses now. . . . I've known that there were people in Washington who were skeptical about any direct dealing with the North Koreans. They were already condemned as outlaws. Kim Il-sung was already condemned as a criminal. . . . And it was kind of like a miracle and almost an incredible statement that Kim Il-sung gave me in response to my proposals, and it was hard to believe. . . .

JUDY WOODRUFF: . . . Are you absolutely persuaded that the North Koreans are going to honor this agreement, that while the talks are going on that it's not just a matter of buying time on the part of the North Koreans, that they will not secretly pursue the program they were pursuing earlier, nuclear program?

JIMMY CARTER: Judy, I'm convinced. But I said this when I got back from North Korea, and people said that I was naïve or gullible and so forth. I don't think I was. In my opinion, this was one of those perfect agreements where both sides won and got what they wanted and there were no—nobody blinked, nobody had to yield. . . . I think the most important lesson is that we should not ever avoid direct talks, direct conversations, direct discussions and negotiations with the main person in a despised or misunderstood or condemned society who could actually resolve the issue. And we went through this for ten years when nobody in our government would meet or talk to Yasir Arafat. The Norwegians did, and they were the ones that brought the peace agreement last summer. . . .

—Jimmy Carter, interview with CNN
(upon his return from North Korea), June 22, 1994

'Oh, James'

007 as International Man of History

—Jeremy Black—

THE RIGHT won the battle of ideas in the late 20th-century, rendering Marxism so rapidly obsolete that states which had openly avowed their communism were happy to embrace the market and seek Western capital. But has the West also won the battle of images? This is an important question in an increasingly cosmopolitan political culture that takes its idioms, aspirations and views from visual sources, particularly television and film. Here there are two challenges: the destructive and sociopathic, or at least anti-social, character of much of the visual material produced within the West; and the decidedly mixed way in which a predominantly Western-dominated media is perceived elsewhere in the world.¹

This makes all the more fascinating the worldwide popularity of a film franchise celebrating the career of a white male British government agent—named James Bond—who combats and defeats evil challenges to the Western democratic and free-market order. The Bond films—and there are now twenty in the official series—are free of all sociopathic suggestions (unless one happens to share the views of militant feminism), and every

one ends in a victory for the West. The series also pays homage to one of the oldest operating bilateral alliances in the world, that between the United States and Britain. The Bond films, and the Ian Fleming novels which were the source of the character and some of the plots, thus offer us an opportunity to see how perceptions of that “special” relationship have changed over the years—from both the British perspective (mostly in Fleming’s novels) and the American one (mostly in the films).

As such perceptions go, one might think that, through the thick and thin of it all, it was James Bond (and, by association, Britain) who saved America. As the seconds tick away toward the close of the films, Bond stops Dr. No from “toppling” a crucial American missile test (1962), prevents Goldfinger (and the Chinese) from making the Fort Knox gold reserves radioactive (1964), thwarts Largo’s attempt to blow up Miami (1965) and (in 1971) Bloefeld’s attempt to destroy Washington, DC (the villain rejects incinerating Kansas, for “the world might not notice”). Bond also foils Zorin’s plan for the devastation of Silicon Valley and with it, America’s

Jeremy Black is professor of history at the University of Exeter, UK. His books include *The Politics of James Bond* (Praeger, 2001) and *America as a Military Power* (Praeger, 2002).

¹See Michael Medved, “That’s Entertainment?: Hollywood’s Contribution to Anti-Americanism Abroad”, *The National Interest* (Summer 2002).

high-technology sector (1985). Other megalomaniacs stopped by Bond, such as Stromberg in *The Spy Who Loved Me* (1977) and Drax in *Moonraker* (1979), would have destroyed America as part of a global cataclysm.

The truth, however, is that it was America that saved Bond. Launched into the world in Fleming's 1953 novel, *Casino Royale*, Bond was a quintessentially British figure, and as such might have remained a character known only within the genre of spy fiction. But he was translated into a kind of Anglo-American hybrid for the film role, and it is the film rather than the literary Bond that is most familiar to millions around the world. The original intentions of the character's creator are glimpsed at secondhand on the silver screen, and even then only fitfully so after the third film, *Goldfinger*, which appeared in 1964, the year of Fleming's early death. After Fleming's flame had gone out, the films more or less took on a life of their own. Let us then attend first to Fleming's novels, afterwards to the films.

Fleming's Cold War

FLEMING's Bond novels illustrate changing images of Britain, America and the world in the postwar era. The politics of *Casino Royale*, published in 1953, were located squarely in the Cold War; it was, after all, about an attempt to thwart Soviet influence in the French trade unions. That this plot line bore at least a glancing resemblance to reality is confirmed by the fact that, in 1947, "Wild Bill" Donovan, the former head of the OSS, had helped persuade the American government to fund opposition to Communist influence in these unions. In the novel, Bond's attempt to out-gamble his Communist opponent is financed by Felix Leiter, a CIA agent, who loans him

32 million (old) francs, with which Bond subsequently defeats the villain in the casino.

Bond's need for American money reflected the pre-eminent role of the United States in the defense of the West, as its arsenal and central bank. Leiter provides material assistance without difficulty and is happy to rely on Bond's skill, suggesting a far smoother working of the Anglo-American intelligence alliance than was in fact the case. The two powers were cooperating in NATO and the UK-US Security Agreement covering signals espionage, and had fought together in Korea, but there were serious differences of opinion, particularly over the Middle East. Furthermore, American concern over the British spy system had risen greatly after the defections of Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean in 1951. In 1952 (justifiable) distrust of Kim Philby, the Secret Services liaison officer in Washington, led the CIA to insist that he not return there.

Fleming did not press Anglo-American tensions in his novels, but he was aware of them. At times his plots can be seen as efforts to create an impression of the normality of British imperial rule and action, with Bond as the defender of empire. In *Live and Let Die* (1954), the sequel to *Casino Royale*, Fleming presented the United States as the threatened country. Bond remarks that New York "must be the fattest atomic-bomb target on the whole face of the world", and—revealing one of Fleming's less than charming character traits—Black Power is seen as a tool of Soviet subversion. The sinister Mr. Big, who practices voodoo, has Bond seized in Harlem.

In *Diamonds Are Forever* (1956), Bond returns to the United States, appealing to British interest in a land of wealth and excitement, as well as illustrating America's role as a model for consumer society. Fighting the Mafia pro-

vides Fleming with an opportunity to express yet another uncharitable view from his childhood, describing the *mafiosi* as “not Americans. Mostly a lot of Italian bums with monogrammed shirts who spend the day eating spaghetti and meat-balls and squirting scent over themselves”, a clear sign of then-contemporary British views on properly reserved masculinity.

In *Dr. No* (1958), Bond thwarts a Soviet-backed attempt to bring down American rockets; a sense of America under threat is also clear in *Goldfinger* (1959). The superintendent at Pennsylvania Station tells Goldfinger that travelers from Louisville report being sprayed from the air by the Soviets. If Bond saves the American gold reserves, the old world coming to the aid of the stronger new, he is also all that a post-Suez Britain can rely on. By this novel, Bond represented a shift from British brawn to British brains, resources to skill.

Anglo-American competition also echoed in the Bond short stories. In Fleming’s “Quantum of Solace” there is mention of rivalry on the Nassau-New York air route, and in “The Hildebrand Rarity”, Milton Krest, a villainous American collector of rare species, treats Bond to an account of British inconsequence:

Nowadays, said Mr. Krest, there were only three powers—America, Russia and China. That was the big poker game and no other country had either the chips or the cards to come into it. Occasionally some pleasant little country . . . like England would be lent some money so that they could take a hand with the grown-ups. But that was just being polite like one sometimes had to be—to a chum in one’s club who’d gone broke.

Bond finds this argument naïve and recalls an aphorism about America lacking “a period of maturity”, but Krest’s

words reflect the growing perception of Britain as weak.

Bond’s dashing style could conceal the diminished British political and military presence in Cold War confrontations, but only barely. The British need to adapt to America was also an important, albeit subdued, theme in the politics of the Bond novels and the earlier films. In the person of the wife-beating Krest, who is in due course murdered, American wealth and power beget insensitivity and sadism, making for an unsettling account of what British weakness could lead to.

Thunderball (1961) represented a departure for Fleming with the introduction of SPECTRE (the Special Executive for Counterintelligence, Terrorism, Revenge and Extortion)—an evil, transnational network unconstrained by ideology. This shift can be seen as a surrender to fantasy occasioned, in part, by the decline of the British Empire and Fleming’s subsequent lack of certainty about, it seems, pretty much everything. Britain, however, is still presented as playing a major role in the world. “M” declares: “We’ve teamed up with the CIA to cover the world. Allen Dulles is putting every man he’s got on to it and so am I”—as if the two were equal. Bond is given CIA support in the Bahamas, providing an opportunity to probe the unsettled nature of the Anglo-American relationship. Bond fears he will be sent “a muscle-bound ex-college man with a crew-cut and a desire to show up the incompetence of the British . . . to gain credit with his chief.” In fact, he again gets Leiter.

Bond is keen to borrow superior American weaponry, while an American nuclear submarine plays a role in helping thwart the villain. Its commander tells Bond, “These atomic weapons are just too damned dangerous. Why, any one of these little sandy cays around here could hold the whole of the United States to ransom—just with one of my missiles

trained on Miami.” This reflection not only pointed the way forward for a new genre of espionage/adventure novels, but it eerily anticipated the Cuban Missile Crisis. (In 1961, Kennedy had included Fleming’s *From Russia, With Love* in a list of his ten favorite books.)

You Only Live Twice (1964) reflected Fleming’s increasing melancholia about Britain, with the fictional Bond undoubtedly mirroring the author’s moods: Britain is in decline, the Americans are refusing to pass on information, in part because they now treat the Pacific as a “private preserve”, and therefore the British seek their own intelligence information from Japan. In his 1959 tour to the region, Fleming had noted Britain’s greatly lessened influence in East Asia. In the book, a Soviet scheme to use nuclear blackmail to force the removal of American bases from Britain and British nuclear disarmament is thwarted by Kennedy’s willingness to threaten nuclear war—a step taken as a result of British intelligence information.

Published posthumously, *The Man with the Golden Gun* (1965) warned about links between the KGB, the Mafia, the Black Power movement, terrorism and drug smuggling. Through Bond, Fleming expresses deep skepticism about the likely success of American pressure on Castro: “If the Americans once let up on their propaganda and needling and so forth, perhaps even make a friendly gesture or two, all the steam’ll go out of the little man.” Of course, he was right, and the lesson, though now 37 years old, still waits to be learned today.

After Fleming’s death, the novels continued. As a character, Bond could not be copyrighted, so the best way to deal with the threat of imitations was for Glidrose, the house that owned the publishing rights to the Bond novels, to commission a sequel. The first of these, *Colonel Sun* (1968), was written by Bond

fan Kingsley Amis under the pseudonym Robert Markham. In it, the Chinese were the villains. Aside from *post hoc* novelizations of film screenplays, the writing of original novels was resumed in 1981 by John Gardner, who produced a whole sequence. The last of these was *Cold Fall* (1996), which depicts the thwarting of General Brutus Clay’s attempt to stage a fascist coup in America on behalf of the Children of the Last Days (COLD). Gardner’s successor, Raymond Benson, an American board member of the Ian Fleming Foundation, is still producing Bond stories.

The Celluloid Bond

FLEMING’s novels capture Britain’s sense of pride but also its decline in the Anglo-American context. The Bond films show instead a parade of evils with which America has had to deal, but luckily, always able to call upon plucky Britain to stand by its side. In an odd sort of way, the James Bond of film is like Churchill—brave, bold and utterly appealing. But what Churchill was to reality, Bond has been to a kind of Batmanesque comic book fantasy come to the screen—only in the Bond case the comic book stage has been skipped.

Ironically, the first portrayal of Bond on screen cast him as an American, “Jimmy Bond”, in a 1954 CBS hour-long television version of *Casino Royale*. In contrast to the novel, it was a British agent named Clarence Leiter who assisted Bond. Thus was the Anglo-American relationship depicted in the book reversed for American consumption. But not for long.

Excluding the parody *Casino Royale* (1967) and the return of Sean Connery in *Never Say Never Again* (1983), all the Bond films have been the work of Eon Productions. Eon was established by

Harry Saltzman, a Canadian, and Albert Broccoli, an American, who in 1961 persuaded United Artists to finance a six-picture set. (Broccoli eventually bought Saltzman out, and his family has retained control since.) Saltzman and Broccoli are the ones who established the tone of the series. Fleming had wanted David Niven, a stylish public-school gent, to play Bond, but Broccoli wanted a tougher, mid-Atlantic image that would appeal to American filmgoers as a man of action without jarring British mannerisms. Bond had to be self-contained, not self-satisfied, and thus, with Sean Connery, a star was born.

Perhaps half the world's population has seen a Bond film, ensuring that billions of people have viewed an image of global struggle through Western eyes. Individual films in the series have not done as well as, say, *Star Wars*, but the series as a whole has been more profitable than any other. Its influence is harder to gauge. Oleg Gordievsky, the KGB resident-designate in London (a long-term double-agent who defected to the British in 1985), revealed in January 2001 that he had to secure prints of the films for the Central Committee of the Communist Party, who liked to watch them; that the KGB was interested in the high-tech devices used by Bond; and that the films contributed to an impression of British competence that had influenced him. Indeed, Gordievsky's real-life defection to the British rather than to the Americans reflects a long-standing motif in the Bond movies, where Soviet agents prefer to defect to the West via London rather than Washington—beginning with KGB Corporal Tatiana Romanova in *From Russia, with Love* (1963).

Aside from comforting British viewers about their state's continued role and competence, and lacking any of the doubts expressed, for example, in Fleming's novels (and even more clearly

in the novels and films of Len Deighton and John Le Carré), the Bond series also charted shifts in the wider world. However improbable, the film plots, to work as adventure stories, had to resonate with the concerns of viewers. This they did, with themes such as the space race, the Red Chinese "menace", the energy crisis, nuclear confrontation and drug trafficking all played out.

Shifts in the Cold War were also noted. In *You Only Live Twice* (1967), the United States and the USSR are on the verge of a nuclear war after their spacecraft, siezed by SPECTRE, disappear in orbit. By *Moonraker* (1979), however, the Americans check with the Soviets when the radar shows the space station from which Drax is planning to fire germ-laden globes at the Earth. In *Octopussy* (1983) there are good and bad Soviets, and in *A View To a Kill* (1985), Zorin has escaped KGB control—and the Soviets are horrified at the prospect of the destruction of Silicon Valley, which supplies microchips for Soviet use as well. In *The Living Daylights* (1987), the KGB head emerges in a positive light as does the Afghan resistance; the villains turn out to be a KGB general and his American partner who plays at being a military commander. In *License To Kill* (1989), there is no Cold War component at all. Franz Sanchez, a sadistic drug king based in a thinly disguised Panama, is depositing much of his dirty money in the United States. Sanchez takes American orders for drugs and sets the price under the cover of his employee, Professor Joe Butcher, who operates as a television evangelist seeking pledges over the airwaves. Sanchez sees money as the universal solvent, and the "end of history" plays a cameo role through the total absence of competing grand ideologies.

After the longest gap in the film series, Bond returned, in *GoldenEye*

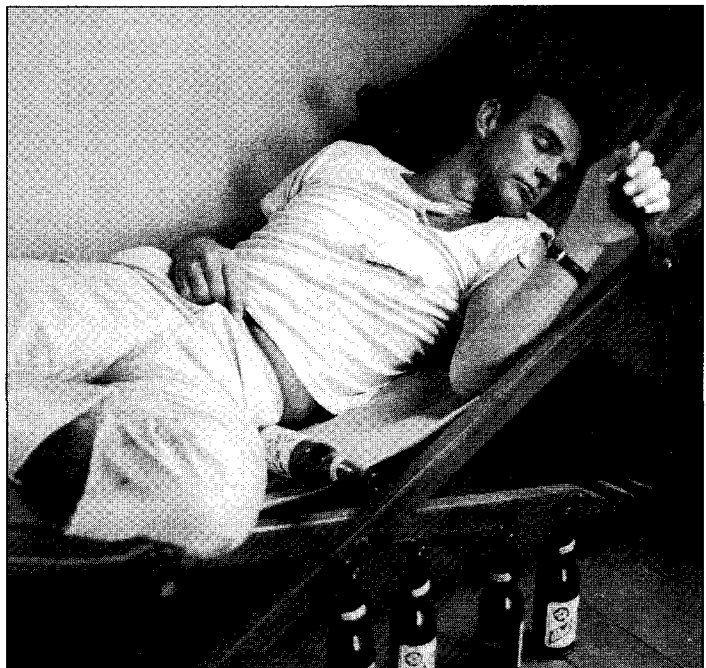
(1995), to the post-Cold War world. The film, set in post-Soviet Russia, revisited themes traditional to the series, not least megalomania and rogue space vehicles. GoldenEye is a space-based weapon that can destroy Western communications through electromagnetic pulses. Its use is hijacked by General Uroumov—head of the Space Division and a would-be strongman—and Alex Trevelyan, an ex-British agent who is head of Janus, a crime and terror group dedicated to exploiting the chaos of post-communist Russia. A satellite-control station hidden underneath a Cuban lake that cannot be spotted by American photo-reconnaissance plays a vital role in the plot. Bond's CIA contact tells him that you cannot light a cigar in Cuba without the Americans knowing about it, while Bond's controller "M", now a woman known as "the evil Queen of numbers", is convinced by analysis of the situation that the Russians cannot have a GoldenEye program. As ever in the films, Bond triumphs over even the most sophisticated of bureaucracies, overcoming the limits of his own system as well as the selfish opposition: indeed, there is much that is similar here to the lonely hero of the quintessentially American Clint Eastwood films.

In *Tomorrow Never Dies* (1997), a billionaire media mogul seeks to catalyze a war between Britain and China in order to provide him with marvellous copy and help his ally, General Chang, seize power in China and open the country to his communications empire. While pretending neutrality, the Americans provide Bond with a likely location for a sunken British

warship and the plane from which he parachutes onto the site. Russia is now the ally of the West, and Afghanistan a locus of freelance menace rather than Cold War villainy (as it was in *The Living Daylights*). At the outset of the film, the options for attacking a terrorist bazaar in Afghanistan that Bond is reconnoitering include a Russian army assault as well as a British cruise missile. Similarly, in *The World Is Not Enough* (1999), the politics relate very much to the real world, in its setting in the volatile Caucasus and in its concern with the fate of the Bosphorus and the control of oil supplies.

The recent film plots all seem to provide a setting for the struggle between Bond and assorted perverse megalomaniacs, but there is much else that makes up the attractive trademark of the celluloid Bond. Aside from the high-tech and special effects, not least the sharp cars and the red-glaring rockets, there are the girls.

The sexual theme had been set in Fleming's novels from the start. In con-



CORBIS

"James Bond" on the set of *Dr. No* (1962)

trast to the sexless plots and women of interwar adventure stories, Fleming portrayed women whose goals were not defined by matrimony and motherhood. At the same time, central to the image of Bond's sexuality in the novels is that he gives as well as receives pleasure. The films put the women on the screen and in so doing *all* thoughts of matrimony and motherhood simply disappear. Bond's dapper sexuality, meanwhile, is made to work as a counterpoint to the classlessness of his film image. He has no sense of anxiety about his masculinity and no hint of sexual concern; there is no disease (or contraception) in the secret agent's Eden. Bond's appeal to women is sometimes irrelevant to the plot—as in the scene with the professor of Danish in *Tomorrow Never Dies*—but it is often instrumental in ensuring the “tipping point” from failure to success, as in the film versions of *Goldfinger* and *Thunderball*. Some women, however, such as Fiona Volpe in *Thunderball*, Helga Brandt in *You Only Live Twice*, Fatima Blush in *Never Say Never Again*, and Xenia Onatopp in *GoldenEye*, have sex with Bond and then try to kill him. In such episodes, female sexuality appears as a threat, but one that Bond is able to overcome. How very comforting.

THE THREAT to James Bond today is not just from female enemies, however; he is also threatened by looming sanitization. He no longer smokes; indeed, he refers to smoking as a “filthy habit” in *Tomorrow Never Dies*. He appears to have given up drinking as well, and has had to adjust to fashionable norms on sexual behavior. All that is left is near-continuous violence, as the newest Bond release, *Die Another Day*, shows. Having once saved Bond, America is now in the process of making him into a stylish automaton—not quite yet on the order of a Schwarzeneggerean terminator, but then the series is not yet finished, is it?

Nor is that the only problem in Bond's future. Quite aside from his roguishness, if he remains British, Bond must appear something of an anachronism. As Bloefeld mocked in *Diamonds Are Forever*, “Surely you haven't come to negotiate, Mr. Bond. Your pitiful little island hasn't even been threatened.” Nevertheless, his Britishness is part of the frame of reference that ensures continuity for the films. It is difficult to see Bond as the servant of the European Union. If that is what he eventually becomes, one may doubt very much his future American sales potential. □

Shaken, Not Stirred

“A dry martini,” he said. “One. In a deep champagne goblet.”

“Oui, monsieur.”

“Just a moment. Three measures of Gordon's, one of vodka, half a measure of Kina Lillet. Shake it very well until it's ice-cold, then add a large thin slice of lemon-peel. Got it?”

—Ian Fleming, *Casino Royale* (1953)

Books



Power Steering

Walter A. McDougall

Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go It Alone* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 222 pp., \$26.

Michael Mandelbaum, *The Ideas That Conquered the World: Peace, Democracy, and Free Markets in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2002), 512 pp., \$30.

IN SO FAR AS THERE is an intellectual quality to the policy debate over the war on terrorism—and what it does or does not have to do with the problem of Ba'athi Iraq—it tends to recapitulate perspectives that held sway not only before September 11, 2001, but before the fall of the Berlin Wall, as well. In other words, those not inured to orthodoxies or vested points of view were free to see 9/11 as a truly revolutionary discontinuity. Those inured or invested, however, in whatever political or philosophical school of thought they inhabited, have been less given over to the breath-

lessness of novelty and more concerned to knit continuities both analytical and ideological. Good or bad as that may be, nowhere has this tendency been more pronounced than among those just about to finish major books about U.S. foreign policy and international politics when the Twin Towers fell. Indeed, authors whose books were *still in press* on 9/11 had little choice but to assert, in hastily revised introductions, that the shocking events of that day changed little and, in fact, confirmed their preconceived arguments. Thus, the introduction to Joseph Nye, Jr.'s *The Paradox of American Power* defines 9/11 as “a wake-up call” and a “symptom of deeper changes” the book itself was written to analyze.

Nye, an assistant secretary of defense in the Clinton Administration, grew frustrated during the 1990s by Americans' blasé attitudes toward foreign affairs. Some of us, he writes, were indifferent to world affairs after the end of the Cold War, while others were arrogantly complacent in the belief the Gulf War proved the United States “invincible and invulnerable.” As far back as 1989 Nye tried in

vain to persuade Americans that their unique combination of military, economic and cultural power made them “bound to lead” whether they liked it or not. In 1997, Nye and R. James Woolsey tried in vain while in government service to make “catastrophic terrorism” the highest national security priority. Having returned to the deanship of Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government, Nye now means to tell us how to husband and use our power. But the stampede triggered by 9/11 means that he is probably once again trying in vain.

An old quip has it that conservatives speak of paradoxes, liberals of dilemmas, and Marxists of contradictions. His title notwithstanding, Nye is neither a conservative nor a dogmatist of any other variety. He is a keen empiricist, sharp observer and very absorbent sponge. I fancy that his favorite tag line likening security to the air we breathe (taken for granted until it is lacking) was inspired by my own August 1993 *New York Times* column quoting historian Carroll Quigley. In any event, his present book title was inspired by Sebastian Mallory who observed:

The paradox of American power at the end of this millennium is that it is too great to be challenged by any other state, yet not great enough to solve problems such as global terrorism and nuclear proliferation. America needs the help and respect of other nations.

If that is the author’s message, who could possibly argue with it? Indeed, Nye is so even-handed, or rather two-handed (“on the one hand, on the other”), there is scarcely a sentence in the book with which any sensible reader would take issue. He says military power is indispensable, but so too are America’s economic and “soft power” (Nye’s signature phrase) derived from our values and popular culture. Globalized markets and communications enhance America’s soft power, but

breed resentment as well. Geo-economics cannot transcend security imperatives, but excessive reliance on the military arm undermines soft power. The United States should seek multilateral solutions, but on occasion must act on its own. The United States should pursue humanitarian missions, but on occasion must abstain. Nation-states remain the primary actors in world affairs, but 27,000 non-governmental organizations act as a “global conscience” constraining their sovereignty. The Information Revolution empowers larger and freer countries more than smaller and closed ones, but also inhibits the power of all sovereign states. Globalization is a boon to the American economy, but causes anger abroad and in time will erode America’s lead. Immigration remains a source of American strength, but the post-1965 wave adds little to the GNP while taking jobs from low-skilled workers. As for specific conflicts such as those between Israel and the Palestinians, China and Taiwan, or India and Pakistan, *Paradox* has nothing to say.

Can one identify what Nye stands for on the basis of what he seems to oppose? Not easily or directly, because he usually takes shots at vague schools (“the isolationists”) rather than at named individuals. But it is noteworthy that Gertrude Himmelfarb, for example, is tagged as “conservative” while liberal spokespersons are not labeled as such. Nye calls opposition to global protocols, such as those on the environment or the international courts, “arrogant”; skepticism about the United Nations “ideological”; abortion an “extraneous” issue. Democratic debate itself he finds a “messy” process that “doesn’t always come up with the ‘right’ answers.” Above all, the book gives the impression that all the myopia and malfeasance in U.S. foreign policy over the 1990s was somehow the work of a President Jesse Helms and Secretary of State Newt Gingrich. The name of the man who really

presided over America's alleged failings appears just three times from cover to cover, twice in the impersonal phrase "the Clinton Administration" and once in a favorable reference to a particular presidential speech.

If we learn nothing about Nye's undoubted frustration over the internal dynamics of the Clinton foreign policy team, we learn a great deal from his excellent chapters on the challenges posed by globalization, the information revolution and trends on the U.S. home front. Unfortunately, the principles he lays down for meeting those challenges are profoundly equivocal with a single exception: he states boldly that the worst thing we can do is talk and act as if the United States were some sort of overbearing imperium. How interesting, therefore, that Nye concludes by quoting Coral Bell's hope, from the pages of *The National Interest*, that the United States will play its cards right so that "the *Pax Americana*, in terms of its duration, might . . . become more like the *Pax Romana* than the *Pax Britannica*."

IF THE UNITED States does pre-
side over a manner of empire it is surely Jefferson's "empire of liberty." That is the creed restated as orthodoxy in every official speech referring to 9/11: terrorists hate us because of our liberty; hostile regimes fear the appeal of our liberty; abject Iraqis, Afghans and North Koreans nonetheless crave liberty, or will do so once we topple their tyrants. That, Michael Mandelbaum writes, is because three modern ideas—peace, democracy and free markets—have conquered the world. Not "persuaded" or "converted", mind you, but "conquered." And not "will conquer", but "have conquered", notwithstanding the current war on terrorism.

The Christian A. Herter Professor of American Foreign Policy at the Johns Hopkins' School of Advanced International Studies and fellow of the Council on

Foreign Relations, Mandelbaum was also ambushed by Al-Qaeda while his book was in press. So he, too, amended his introduction assuring us 9/11 was *not* a new Pearl Harbor and did *not* usher in a new world. Rather, it "illuminated the main features of a world that already existed, a world that had emerged in its first full form a decade earlier but had been two centuries in the making." One proof of that is the absence of any danger that either 9/11 or the American riposte to it would spark a major war: *all* major nations value peace and the global market, if not yet Western democracy. Another proof is the terrorists' utter lack of a competitive ideology on the order of the French or Russian revolutions: they are nothing but nihilists, desperate resisters. Thus, even though "the attacks of September 11 aimed at the heart of the international order of the twenty-first century, their effect was more like that of a badly stubbed toe." It hurt, but it could not stop the march of history because it "could not dislodge the system that these buildings embodied, which was pervasive, deeply rooted, and based on ideas and experiences that terrorism could not eradicate."

Mandelbaum's effort is more ambitious than Nye's. He means, in the manner of Francis Fukuyama, to trace the gradual triumph of what he calls "the Wilsonian triad." He grants the ideas of peace, the free market and representative democracy all trace their roots to the 18th-century Enlightenment. He also grants Woodrow Wilson was a failure in his time, a prophet more than a statesman. But Wilson's liberal internationalism promoting "restraints on the exercise of power by governments" at length defeated virulent nationalism, militarism and communism. The central theme of world history since the collapse of the Soviet Union, therefore, has simply been the "defense, maintenance, and extension of the three parts of the Wilsonian triad." To

put it in Clintonian terms: assertive multilateralism, enlargement and globalization.

Even if one grants Mandelbaum's triumphalist claims for peace, democracy and free markets, however, his historical account obscures our present reality. He claims, for instance, that Wilson's dream was to check the exercise of governmental power, as if he were a good Madisonian. In fact, Wilson lusted after the power to impose his will, first on the Germans, then on the Allied imperialists, and finally on the United States Senate, brooking no opposition or compromise to his ideological purity. Wilson died lamenting, "Would to God I had had such power!"

More dubious still is the author's suggestion that Wilson's program of disarmament, democracy and a League of Nations would have forestalled World War II if only the major states, led by the United States, had adopted it. Not so. To begin with, they did adopt it, to a surprising degree, by the mid-1920s, led by Republican internationalists such as Charles Evans Hughes and Herbert Hoover. It was the Great Depression, not Versailles, that wrecked democracy in Germany and Japan and enervated the Western powers. The League of Nations would likely have been even more ineffective had the United States been a member (Hoover was a pacifist, Franklin Roosevelt an isolationist), while the only plausible barrier to the fascist challenge was the French army. When the "Wilsonian triad" really did triumph in Western Europe and Japan, it was thanks not to the power of its ideas but to the utterly devastating, indeed ruthless, force brought to bear on the enemies of those ideas. Curtis Le May's bombers, not Wilson's Fourteen Points or FDR's Four Freedoms, cured the Germans and Japanese of militarism once and for all.

The Cold War is a subtler case to which Mandelbaum devotes a whole chapter. But his one (albeit awkward) sen-

tence about mass protests in Eastern Europe and Moscow gets at the truth: "Those moments were decisive for the fate of Communism but what decided its fate was not the irresistible power of the crowds: It was the decision of the Communist authorities not to fire on them." But why did the Soviet leadership lose faith in its own ideology? Not because Wilsonian truths melted their hearts. It was because free societies, to the stupefaction of Leninists, grew ever more musclebound under the pressure of Cold War while their own limbs grew more sclerotic. In short, the ideological power politics first of the Right and then of the Left were undone by the enormous and unexpected power of the liberal middle.

Why are liberal societies superior not only in the manufacture of Nye's "soft power", but of hard military and technological prowess as well? Mandelbaum's several and sometimes contradictory answers suggest he has not quite sorted that out. He begins by stating with confidence that "Great Britain and France invented the modern world" and that the "importance of the French and industrial revolutions can scarcely be overstated." The first bequeathed popular sovereignty, the second the market economy. But Mandelbaum overstates the importance of the French Revolution by ignoring the prior American invention of liberal republican government between 1776 and 1789, then by skirting over the French Revolution's decidedly illiberal drift into terror, totalitarianism and militarism. Some 400 pages later he does discover the roots of liberalism "in the Anglo-American world of the early modern era", only to revert at the end back to the "French and industrial revolutions" hypothesis. The history matters, for if one gets wrong the origins of the modern democratic state one cannot explain properly why liberalism has triumphed.

The wrong turn made by so many

scholars trained as political scientists is to date the emergence of the system of sovereign states from the 1648 Peace of Westphalia, brought about, as Mandelbaum has it, “by the triumph of the monarch over the nobility and clergy.” This interpretation, first proposed by Marxists, depicts centralizing, state-building kings and their allies in the rising bourgeoisie sweeping away the “reactionary” medieval holdovers, thus clearing the historical decks for capitalism. The truth is that almost the reverse was the case. The year 1648 marked the triumph of the German nobility and Lutheran clergy over the centralizing Holy Roman Emperor. It also marked the triumph of the Dutch nobility and Calvinist clergy over the centralizing King of Spain. The 1640s and, later, 1688 marked the triumph of the English nobility and Anglican clergy over the centralizing Stuart monarchs. To be sure, France’s Bourbon kings did repress feudal and ecclesiastical authorities, but they did so internally in the decades before 1648. Most telling is what happened over the 150 years after 1648. The so-called modern states forged by the so-called absolute monarchs proved far *less* able to mobilize financial and human resources than liberal Protestant states such as England, whose concepts of balanced government and natural rights were of *medieval* origin.

Why is such history important? Because while Mandelbaum is correct about the triumph of free market democracy, his insistence on including peace (or “de-bellification”) in his Wilsonian triad obscures the cause of the triumph, which is the ferocious power of liberal empires at *war*. The Athenian and Roman republics in their imperial heydays, the British Empire in its, and the United States most of all, have been bellicose beyond measure, visiting *annihilation* on those who threatened their peace, prosperity and liberty. And if popular sover-

eignty and the market economy reign supreme in our day it is because the American eagle, like the eagles born aloft by the legions of Caesar, surveys the globe, arrows gripped in its talons, daring anyone to interfere with its pursuit of happiness.

LIKE NYE, Mandelbaum talks of paradox. He notes that the lower the costs of leadership, the less eager seem the American people to pay them, while the same features that make the liberal agenda attractive also inhibit America’s ability to sustain the institutions that embody those features. But the paradoxes dissolve once one admits that our Wilsonian world was forged and sustained largely by wars, however reluctant Wilson, FDR and Truman were to wage them. From the Whig ascendancy after 1688 to 2002, Anglo-Americans have known that freedom is power, which is why they have so often used power to spread freedom. That Mandelbaum, the once-realist author of *The Fate of Nations*, so much underplays the role of power in advancing ideas and norms is striking. Surely he realizes that if peace, democracy and free markets prevail over much of the world it is because the United States reserves the right to *suspend* those very norms when necessity dictates—and necessity has not been a stranger. Nobody wants to admit it—not Americans who have better things to do than fight perpetual wars for perpetual peace, and certainly not Europeans, who know that every government’s clout at the peace table is proportional to its effort at war—but an American empire exists. Call it an empire of liberty, a benevolent hegemony or *Pax Americana*, but there it is.

Whether the Wilsonian triad has indeed won, to the extent that Mandelbaum claims, remains dubious. His rich middle chapters describe how the very triumph of liberal ideas at the end of the Cold War

fertilized seeds of discord from one end of Asia to the other. Russia's conversion to Western norms is, at best, dubious. East Asia, where China, Japan, Russia and American power hover cheek-by-jowl over Korean and Taiwanese flashpoints, is "the most dangerous place on the planet." In South Asia, the Hindu-Muslim clash of civilizations is now nuclear. In the Middle East, aptly termed by Mandelbaum a "dragons' lair", serpents of terror seek weapons of mass destruction while Westerners covet the oily hoard.

As potential catastrophes pile up on the pages one begins to suspect that liberal world order is far from secure. Mandelbaum reassures us by affirming the propositions underpinning the liberal theory of history: democracies do not fight other democracies; free markets beget democracy; all peoples crave the prosperity free markets offer. And nowhere, Mandelbaum thinks, has more thrilling proof of the theory emerged than in the European Union, which he hopes is "a foretaste of the way the world of the twenty-first century will be organized." He even endorses world government, holding a world of liberal sovereign states to be the "second best solution."

Here we can see where Mandelbaum's original assumptions about the French Revolution have led him astray. For the Europe he so admires today is a continent in thrall to Napoleonic bureaucracies regulating citizens' every act and word, a continent that complains justifiably of a "democracy gap", a continent so de-bellitized it must rely on shoot-from-the-hip Yankees to keep the liberal theory of history credible. Add to that Europe's cultural demoralization, demographic decay, growing xenophobia and economic stagnation; can one really go to Europe today and say, "I have seen the future—and it works"? Evidently, Mandelbaum not only says yes, but he credits the French and Industrial revolutions with inventing the very con-

cept of *happiness*, as if St. Francis of Assisi despaired beneath his "brother sun and sister moon." Then he concludes with what must be the greatest understatement in print today: "And in the wake of the Cold War, although not every one of the six billion human inhabitants of the planet was happy, there was, for the first time in the modern era, a rough consensus on the political, economic and international conditions best suited for them to be happy."

Nye is precise if somewhat crabbed about the world 9/11 couldn't change. Mandelbaum is expansive but muddled, as his penchant for similes demonstrates. Building a democracy, he writes, is like assembling a computer. Maintaining arms control regimes is like assembling a network of computers. The sovereign state is like an operating system that runs computer programs. The international system is like a fixed price menu. NATO expansion was like "an unforced error in tennis." The Cold War unfolded like biological evolution, competition among business firms or religious conversion. Wilsonian institutions are like dikes, dams and levees keeping the flow of history in its channel. Those who shun foreign intervention now that the Cold War is over are like hunters who turn vegetarian after killing deer is no longer deemed poaching. Those who resist liberal economics are like the little girl who fancied Brussels sprouts, "but not enough to eat them." Establishing liberal security and economic institutions is less like architecture than horticulture. Foreign aid is like candy, a source of quick energy but unhealthy. Opponents of the Wilsonian triad are like Harpo Marx in *Duck Soup*, tearing up a diplomatic dispatch because "he gets mad he can't read."¹

¹The author also misspells as *legae* the word for laws in the Latin proverb *sine moribus leges vanae* (without morals laws are vain). Since that is the University of Pennsylvania motto, I am compelled to make the correction.

Mandelbaum concedes that civilization has its discontents. He echoes Nye in acknowledging that the global triumph of liberalism will widen the gap between rich and poor, cause alienation and anxiety, increase pollution and exacerbate global warming. But “the only thing worse than the triumph of the ideas that conquered the world is their defeat.” Will they triumph? In his introduction the author assures us they already have. Why then, does he conclude that introduction with a promise to tell readers “everything important about the history of the twenty-first century except its outcome”?

MOST IMPERIAL outcomes are at best ambivalent and complicated. Rome’s glory began to fade by dint of its own corruption even before the days of Caesar Augustus. But residual civic pride, habits of statesmanship and the grit to exterminate rebels permitted its empire to survive another five centuries. Britannia’s

glory began to fade by dint of its industrial decline and moral self-doubt. But courage in the face of adversity, tactical virtuosity and a stiff upper lip permitted its empire to survive another five decades. Now that September 11 has obliged Americans to confess to an empire, our task is somehow to resist corruption, decline and self-doubt, thereby proving John Quincy Adams wrong when he warned America might become “dictatress of the world” only to lose her own spirit. Nye and Mandelbaum rightly remind us that our spirit is what brought us this far in the first place. But only the owl of Minerva, decades or centuries hence, can tell us whether a Wilsonian empire is a contradiction—or paradox. □

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The Democratic Ego at War

There is, let me assure you, nothing in nature more egocentric than the embattled democracy. It soon becomes the victim of its own war propaganda. It then tends to attach to its own cause an absolute value which distorts its own vision of everything else. *Its* enemy becomes the embodiment of all evil. *Its* own side, on the other hand, is the center of all virtue. The contest comes to be viewed as having a final, apocalyptic quality. If *we* lose, all is lost; life will no longer be worth living; there will be nothing to be salvaged. If we win, then everything will be possible; all problems will become soluble; the one great source of evil—*our* enemy—will have been crushed; the forces of good will then sweep forward unimpeded; all worthy aspirations will be satisfied.

It will readily be seen that people who have got themselves into this frame of mind have little understanding for the issues of any contest other than the one in which they are involved. The idea of people wasting time and substance on any *other* issue seems to them preposterous.

—George Kennan, *Russia and the West under Lenin and Stalin* (1960)

Endless Churchill

Harvey Sicherman

Roy Jenkins, *Churchill: A Biography* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2001), 736 pp., \$28.

Geoffrey Best, *Churchill: A Study in Greatness* (Rio Grande, OH: Hambledon Press, 2002), 384 pp., \$21.

John Keegan, *Winston Churchill: A Penguin Lives Biography* (New York: Viking Press, 2002), 208 pp., \$19.95.

John Lukacs, *Churchill: Visionary. Statesman. Historian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 200 pp., \$15.

Klaus Larres, *Churchill's Cold War: The Politics of Personal Diplomacy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 592 pp., \$40.

WINSTON Churchill would be pleased. His age has vanished but the memory of him has not. The German wars, the Iron Curtain, the Cold War, the “balance of terror” and even—alas, he would say—the British Empire now belong to history. Churchill himself, on the other hand, continues to excite enormous interest, especially on this side of the Atlantic.

American fascination with Churchill has much to do with our own character. We greatly admire leaders who do the right thing despite overwhelming odds, such as those faced by Churchill's Britain in 1940. We dislike politicians as a rule, except for the colorful and talented ones. Few have ever matched Churchill's range—orator, author, painter, wit, *bon vivant*, sage and seer.

For these reasons, too, Churchill still attracts the best authors. The five books reviewed here, all published within the past two years, were written, respectively by Lord Roy Jenkins, an acclaimed British biographer; Geoffrey Best, John Keegan and John Lukacs, all distinguished historians; and Klaus Larres, a younger German scholar who is currently the Henry A. Kissinger Fellow at the Library of Congress. But do these books (some 2,200 pages *in toto*!) tell us anything new about the man? And more importantly, does Churchill have anything to say through them to us about our world?

Only one of the authors (Larres) claims to break fresh ground. The others offer different perspectives on that which is already well known, some of which tell us more about the writer than the subject. Thus, John Keegan's brief but elegant Penguin history has a captivating introduction that explains why, to young Britons in the 1940s and 1950s, Churchill not only represented the past, but a past they were eager to be rid of—and for whom the Suez disaster, under his successor Anthony Eden, was “finis to all for which Churchill had stood.” But a year later, alone in New York, old recordings of Churchill's wartime speeches cast a spell, and Keegan became an admirer.

John Lukacs is, well, John Lukacs: he commits many a drive-by shooting *en route* to the main controversies. He is especially good at exploding the absurd argument that Churchill should have made a deal with Hitler in 1940, thereby preserving the Empire and avoiding that ultimate horror, American domination. Lukacs also reminds us that Churchill understood both Stalin and Soviet Russia

(he rarely said Soviet Union) much better than did Roosevelt, Truman or Eisenhower. He knew the evil of the Soviet empire, but he also appreciated the historic caution and fear of superior force that ran through the Kremlin.

Geoffrey Best's well-written and nicely balanced biography contains his own elegy for the Churchillian virtues that he finds lamentably lacking in modern Britain. It is clear that his was a labor of both love and longing.

Lord Jenkins' massive thousand-page tome offers his special insight as a veteran Labour Party parliamentarian who observed Churchill from the opposition benches; he understood Sir Winston's passion for the House of Commons and the way it shaped his life. But Jenkins, too, becomes self-indulgent, concluding on the curious note, perhaps of interest only to himself, that Churchill, by a small margin, was a greater man than Gladstone, the subject of an earlier magisterial Jenkins biography.

Once beyond the reflections of the authors' special proclivities—like so many mirrors in a fun house—Churchill re-emerges much the same as before. As even his early photographs reveal, he was a man of defiant determination animated by the ceaseless energy of a questing ego.

Churchill's ego, which might have made him a monster, was civilized instead by two taskmasters. The first was a sense of destiny informed by English patriotism. A man hell-bent for action, Churchill narrowly survived numerous brushes with death in India, Cuba, the Sudan and South Africa—all before he was thirty. He was

nearly killed on the Western Front in World War I and badly injured in a 1931 New York traffic accident. Churchill interpreted his survival as proof that he was marked by a special Providence to advance the cause of Britain, which was in turn, as he saw it, the cause of freedom and civilization. No wonder that on May 10, 1940, the day he became prime minister, he concluded that all his life had been

merely a preparation for the supreme test that awaited him. Otherwise, he thought, his "luck" was inexplicable.

The other lash to his ego was the notable Churchill humor. His favorite target was himself, not only because he found his own foibles amusing but also because it disarmed his critics. His rhetorical set pieces, the product of a massive effort to overcome a lisp and stutter, were ill-suited to parliamentary jibes and interruptions. A self-deprecating wit was, therefore, both indulgent and useful in depriving opponents of material.

Geoffrey Best offers a less well-known example of such humor in Churchill's first speech as Leader of the Opposition in 1945. Churchill took on the humiliation of his electoral defeat, and the notoriously difficult captainship of the losing Tories, with this little vignette:

A friend of mine . . . was in Zagreb when the results of the late general election came in. An old lady said to him, 'Poor Mr. Churchill, I suppose now he will be shot.' He said the sentence might be mitigated to one of the various forms of hard labor which are always open to His Majesty's subjects.



CORBIS

Churchill aboard the *Queen Mary*,
April 1949

Such, Churchill declared to the House of Commons, was now indeed his fate.

Churchill had reason to be self-deprecating. The Great Man was often the greatest obstacle to his own success. Time and again, as Stanley Baldwin once put it, the enormously gifted Churchill lacked the gift of judgment. Had he died in 1939, his life would have been accounted a failure. His prescient warnings about Hitler, for example, were discounted by some, in part, because they came from a man who stood doggedly by that least worthy of men, King Edward VIII, later Duke of Windsor, during the December 1936 abdication crisis. A mesmerizing orator, who was himself sometimes the most mesmerized, Churchill misjudged that occasion completely, turning the whole House against him.

Lord Jenkins includes such episodes and others in a generally admiring book that also gives us much inside information about Churchill the private man: a doting father and husband but often impossible to live with; a great earner but a much greater spender, short of money most of his life; a man of very few close friends, really a club of one. Then there was the Churchill method. His relentless questioning of the generals during World War II was an essential part of his leadership, as Eliot Cohen has recently observed.¹ But there was a price to be paid. Lord Alanbrooke, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, said, "Winston had ten ideas every day, one of which was good, and he did not know what it was." All ten, however, had to be staffed while the war raged on.

To make matters worse, Churchill's work habits were grotesquely inconvenient for his subordinates. While others worked through the day, he was either in bed, in the bath or at table, almost always attended by those most faithful of his companions, scotch and cigars. When others wound down at nightfall, he wound

up. Clementine Churchill observed that her husband knew nothing about how other people lived.

Churchill brought another more constructive, indeed vital, quality to his work. He was inured to mistakes and a veteran of defeat. After a brilliant early career he rose and fell several times. Never a real party man, he used the Liberals to ascend and then the Tories as a refuge after the Liberals shriveled. By the early 1930s he had no prospects; but "never despair." It took the catastrophes of 1940 to hoist into office the British politician most experienced in catastrophe. And then he became, as his most severe critic, the Labour radical Aneurin Bevan, put it, "the great advocate who put the case of Britain to the world and the destiny of Britain to the British."

The advocate knew the strengths and weaknesses of the case. Best writes of Churchill's "sense of his beloved country's resources in manpower and everything else being squeezed till the pips squeaked." And this provides the context for Klaus Larres to assert that Churchill's personal diplomacy, later known as "summitry", was his favored and most important diplomatic tool to ease the strain on Britain and to achieve objectives seemingly beyond reach. His most interesting example is the generally less well-known Churchillian effort (1953–55) to convene a Big Three meeting with the Americans and the Russians to ease the Cold War.

LARRES IS persuasive on this and other themes. His book (though thickly invested with archival research and not the easiest read) corrects the idea that after World War II Churchill had somehow levitated into an international statesman whose gaze ranged far beyond his

¹Cohen, *Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen, and Leadership in Wartime* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002).

own country's interests. Not so: his gaze, no matter how far-reaching, was firmly linked to Britain's destiny. Churchill's problem, the same one that bedeviled him after 1943 when the American war effort surpassed Britain's, could be called "relative weakness." By any measure, postwar Britain was a powerful state; but it was no longer the pivotal state whose power, if moved this way or that, would be decisive. The outcome of World War II was Europe in eclipse, Soviet Russia on the move, and America, well, Roosevelt had said the Americans would leave within two years. Churchill thus saw Britain, and by extension Europe, in danger of Soviet expansion. For the longer term, the Great Powers might "tear themselves to pieces" through an eventual clash between the Americans and the Russians made all the more ominous by the development of nuclear weapons.

While recognizing Britain's relative weakness, Churchill thought his country still held unique advantages. British foreign policy operated in three circles: empire/commonwealth; special relationship with America; and continental Europe. Britain—and Churchill, himself unique—were therefore specially fitted to influence events. And so he did, even when out of power between 1945 and 1951. Churchill's themes were "Iron Curtain", English-speaking peoples, and a United Europe. In Truman's presence he warned in 1946 that only a revived Anglo-American combination could thwart Soviet ambitions already evident behind the "Iron Curtain." Almost simultaneously he renewed his patronage of European unity to be built upon what he called an "astonishing" idea: the integration of France and Germany. Thus, Britain's role would be to nurture the new European grouping that would fill the vacuum created by the war's devastation and (thus) block the communist advance. Britain would also work to bind America to the

defense of Europe. Yet, it was never Churchill's intention that his country should become either an indistinct appendage of the United States or merely a middle-size European power.

After becoming prime minister once again in 1951, the aging statesman concluded that Britain needed above all a period of peace and recuperation. This made him a "wet" in domestic politics; no Thatcher or Reagan, Churchill (like Eisenhower) secured much of the welfare state bequeathed by his predecessors, guaranteeing a social peace especially important in class-divided Britain. But this cost money, and the country's financial troubles were a constant burden. The need to develop new weapons, the costs of sustaining new commitments (the British Army of the Rhine) and old ones, such as the Suez base, the Korean War, rearmament—all these pressures bore down on an England just freeing itself of rationing.

After a year's effort, the economy began to expand, and Churchill could then focus on matters of state. An intensified Cold War could only reinforce Britain's weakness and Europe's eclipse—and further strain Britain's finances. So Churchill proposed a repeat of the wartime formula. The "Big Three" (in reality, two and a half) should explore the points dividing them. A first summit among the leaders ("jaw-jaw is better than war-war") would dispel the blinding fog of suspicion and look for common ground; later meetings at different expert levels would secure agreement in detail. This would in no way disarm the West. Rather, in Churchill's phrase, "we rearm to parley." Essentially, he wished to do in the 1950s what the democracies had failed to do in the 1930s: confront a would-be aggressor from a position of strength and use that strength to sustain a tension-easing diplomacy.

Such an approach was adopted eventually by all American administrations

(including Reagan's), and it was reinforced by another Churchillian concept, "the balance of terror." But from 1951 to the end of Churchill's term in office it had few takers. Larres' narrative explains how the old man persisted against a Foreign Office he loathed (they loathed him, too); an uncomprehending or slow-moving Washington; Adenauer's resistance; French disorder; and a largely concealed post-Stalin succession struggle in Moscow. Age and illness also caught up to Churchill, weakening his hand at critical moments. Ultimately, he ran out of time.

Larres' conclusion, that in 1953 Churchill was willing to trade a united but neutral Germany for a "general settlement" of the Cold War, is arguable. Churchill's European policy was to bind the Germans to the West in every way possible, including rearmament through NATO, a position he reaffirmed in 1954. His reason for not excluding neutralization at the outset of discussions about a summit may have been a ploy so as not to scare off the Russians. Perhaps Larres accepts too readily the Foreign Office view that Churchill was some kind of wrecker who did not realize his own contradictions.

Churchill retired very reluctantly on April 5, 1955, after a brilliant speech on nuclear arms still worth the read, predicting that "safety will be the sturdy child of terror, and survival the twin brother of annihilation."² He had the grim satisfaction of seeing the Geneva Summit take place not long thereafter, although without him. The next year was grimmer still when, at Suez, Eden proved Churchill's fears that he was not up to the job. Anglo-American relations were sundered when Eisenhower committed the biggest blunder of the 1950s, sparing Gamel Abdel Nasser for another decade of troublemaking. Churchill lived long enough to see some of this damage repaired, but after a few years of honors and literary activity,

he could only wait patiently for the inevitable, dying in 1965 in his ninetieth year on the same date as his father. His funeral, beautifully described in Lukacs' last chapter, ended an age.

DOES THE Churchill saga say anything to us today? Of course, a war against an evil tyrant always reminds us of Churchill. We can say with considerable assurance what he might have advised about the current crisis with Iraq. He would tell us that the country had been invented by the British after World War I and that he, as Colonial Secretary, had selected a Hashemite prince to rule it in payment of services rendered the Crown during the campaign against the Turks. If Iraq has not worked out, he would counsel, then reinvent it. And then with an airy puff on his cigar, he would urge us to do as he had done to protect the pipeline to Haifa: use the air force as the primary weapon. He would certainly have approved British support for the United States even if led by a Labour Prime Minister. Finally, with a sway of his hand over a map, Churchill would give the Kurds the autonomous region he thought they deserved eighty years ago. (As for the other Arabs, especially the Al-Saud, once on London's payroll, we need not explore Churchill's rather robust views here.)

Still, by Churchill's scale, Saddam is a third-rate bully and Iraq an ugly sideshow. He would have sought his own relevance in larger themes, one of which may be found in a neglected part of the Iron Curtain speech. Churchill had never been fond of the United Nations, a Rooseveltian contraption unworkable except in that rare event when the five

²Churchill gave the "Defence Speech" on March 5, 1955. See House of Commons, Parliamentary Debates, 5th Series, Vol. 537, January 3, 1955.

veto-bearing powers agreed. Instead, he argued for regional alliances in concert with those powers possessing a broader reach. Surely this has been the lesson of the 1990s, which began with great ambitions for the United Nations and ended with U.S. and NATO action on the ground, if there was to be action at all. These were the true "Sinews of Strength." If Churchill opposed a crippling multilateralism, he was nevertheless no great fan of fighting alone. As he once said, "When one has reached the summit of power . . . there is a danger of being convinced that one can do anything one likes." To which he would add, "The only thing worse than fighting with allies is fighting without them."

Finally, Churchill's last bout of statesmanship, his ultimately futile effort to ease the Cold War from Britain's position of relative weakness, has its lesson for

today's manifestly frustrated Europeans. As the old man would have put it, if you can't put the big divisions in the field then you had better try to settle the problem when it is still at the battalion level. As matters stand today, it is clear that the major European states will not assemble the big divisions by themselves; the European Union, that bureaucratic miasma, will not act swiftly to prevent a crisis. But, he would continue, if you will not change the situation, then there is no use complaining about your destiny being in the hands of others. Fifty years ago, Britain's problem was overstretch; today, Europe's problem is underreach. This can be changed. The potential is there; it is the will that is wanting. Churchill would know what to do. □

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A Papier-Maché Fortress

Paul W. Schroeder

Philip Bobbitt, *The Shield of Achilles: War, Peace, and the Course of History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002), 921 pp., \$40.

PHILIP BOBBITT's *The Shield of Achilles* is a bad book. It is error strewn, it suffers from grand delusions of theoretical adequacy, and it is unscholarly. This judgment, however, being evidently a minority one, imposes an obligation not only to render the work's aim, thesis and argument fairly before criticizing it, but

also to account for the book's evident appeal to the public, as well as to several distinguished historians who have endorsed it.

The former task is not easy, given the book's great length and convoluted development, but is aided by repeated statements of the author's aims and theses. The book, Bobbitt writes in his prologue, concerns the evolution of the modern state, in particular "the *relationship* between strategy and the legal order as this relationship has shaped and transformed the modern state and the society

composed of these states.” Wars and the attendant revolutions in military affairs, he argues, have been the engine of change in the constitutional order of states since the Renaissance: “*each* of the important revolutions in military affairs enabled a political revolution in the fundamental constitutional order of the State.”

Bobbitt holds that four great epochal wars transformed the dominant constitution of states in previous eras (Habsburg-Valois, the Thirty Years’ War, the wars of Louis XIV and the French Revolutionary wars). Now the most recent epochal war, the Long War of 1914–90, has “brought into being a new form of the state—the market-state”—and put “the constitutional order of the nation-state . . . everywhere under siege.” Major new developments—human rights as a universal norm, weapons of mass destruction, global and transnational threats, globalization of the economy, and global communications networks penetrating all states and societies—threaten both the sovereignty of individual states and the legitimacy of the international order by making it impossible for nation-states to fulfill their legitimating purpose—namely, to maximize the welfare of their citizens. What Bobbitt calls market-states, however, promise instead to maximize opportunity.

In an instance of the elliptical exposition that characterizes the book throughout, Bobbitt begins the substantive historical defense of this thesis at the end, presenting 1914–90 as a single Long War between fascism, communism and parliamentarianism to decide the dominant constitutional form of the modern nation-state. A brief excursus summarizing the historiographical debate over the revolutions in military affairs in the 15th–18th centuries is followed by three longer chapters covering the history of the state from the Renaissance to 1914. These chapters, together with the one on the Long War, comprise the historical core of

the book, called Book I: The State of War, and the basis for its projections about the present and future. With them come five “plates” that depict in simplified form the patterns and correlations the author detects in history and that encapsulate his essential arguments.

Plate 1 lists six distinct constitutional orders of the state since the Renaissance—princely, kingly, territorial, state-nation, nation-state, and (emerging) market-state. Plate 2 links these to Bobbitt’s five epochal wars that “brought a particular constitutional order to primacy.” Plate 3 lists the peace treaties that “end epochal wars [and] ratify a particular constitutional order for the society of states”—Augsburg, Westphalia, Utrecht, Vienna, Versailles and Paris (1990).

The last two plates concern Bobbitt’s most crucial theses, those that tie strategic, military and constitutional factors tightly together. Plate 4 illustrates how “each constitutional order asserts a unique basis for legitimacy.” In the princely state “the State confers legitimacy on the dynasty”, whereas in the kingly state “the dynasty confers legitimacy on the State.” The territorial state is legitimated by its claim to manage the country efficiently; the state-nation by its claim to forge the identity of the nation; the nation-state by its promise to better the welfare of its citizens; and the emerging market-state by its promise to maximize the opportunities of its citizens. Plate 5, “Historic, Strategic, and Constitutional Innovations”, illustrates how “a constitutional order achieves dominance by best exploiting the strategic and constitutional innovations of its era”; it does this by linking the claimed innovations and dominant political characteristics of each era with their respective military innovations and leading features. For example, the absolutism and secularism characteristic of kingly states is linked to the gunpowder revolution, lengthy sieges and standing

armies, while the trade control and aristocratic leadership that feature in the territorial state are tied to professional armies and limited cabinet wars; and so on with the other main types.

This historical basis laid, Bobbitt turns to the current crisis. The challenge to the nation-state from the current revolution in military affairs, and the nation-state's rapid loss of legitimacy, demands deep thought about the concrete transformations this will require of the new market-state in terms of security, politics and welfare. He surveys what he typologizes as the five policy choices now being offered for the United States after the Cold War—new nationalism, new internationalism, new realism, new evangelism (i.e., democratic peace), and new leadership (i.e., permanent American world hegemony)—but argues that none offers the new paradigm needed. Of three possible forms of the market-state (mercantile, entrepreneurial and managerial)—yet another typology—he concludes that the United States will be an entrepreneurial market-state, as it should. He ends Book I with speculation on the likely character of wars in the coming era of the market-state.

Book II, "States of Peace", is about what Bobbitt calls the society of states. It rests on a key assertion: "that international law derives from constitutional law—and thus follows the same periods of stability and revolutionary change charted in Book I." Thus, "contemporary developments in limiting sovereignty are a consequence of the change in the constitutional order to a market-state." This returns us to the grand historical pattern, once again unfolded from the end rather than the beginning. Two long and strange chapters then develop Bobbitt's argument that the nation-state era in world society, founded on the Wilsonian premise of self-determination, has now run aground on its inability to solve central problems presented

both by nationhood itself and the new world emerging since the Cold War. The first of these describes Versailles and the entire post-World War I settlement primarily through the personality and activities of Wilson's adviser Colonel Edward M. House. The second links the famous Kitty Genovese incident (a gruesome murder in New York City in 1964, which bystanders did nothing to stop) to the war in Bosnia (culminating in the failure of the UN or NATO to stop Bosnian Serb atrocities at Srebrenica in July 1995), in order to demonstrate the death of the society of nation-states.

Book II then returns to earlier history to show how "the great peace settlements of the epochal wars have shaped the constitutional order of the society of states." Brief chapters on the peace settlements of Augsburg, Westphalia, Utrecht and Vienna, and longer ones on Versailles and Paris (1990), summarize the provisions of the treaties and their supposed constitutional impact on the society of states. Accompanying each are short discussions of the interpretations given each settlement by leading jurists and theorists, and in the last section an analysis of various American schools and approaches on the relations between international law and international politics. These discussions are by far the most interesting and instructive parts of the book, demonstrating Bobbitt's expertise and authority in his own field and his ability to construct a tight, coherent narrative and argument. But the relation of these segments to his main argument is unclear.

The final section of Book II, entitled "The Society of Market States", speculates further on the challenges to the new international order of market states, and the nature of war and peace in the coming age. The bewildering variety of the propositions offered and the absence or impossibility of proof or substantiation would seem to put this section beyond

summary or critical evaluation, at least for historians. The author insists, however, that his arguments and prescriptions for the present and future derive from the historical scheme earlier developed and schematized, so even Bobbitt's futurology invites evaluation according to the standards of historical scholarship.

A Reach Too Shallow

AS HISTORY, Bobbitt's work unquestionably presents a broad panorama and offers a bold, arresting and apparently coherent set of theses and arguments relevant to the world today. The historical scheme seems compelling, the analysis of the current crisis cogent, the predictions and scenarios for the future important to consider. The overall recommendation—that America strive for market principles globally and in domestic politics, and continued American military domination and the ability to fight a series of low-level contests as the only way to avoid the next epochal war—offers a program congenial to many Americans today. These qualities, one supposes, have recommended the work to many lay readers and some distinguished scholars. What is wrong with it?

As historical scholarship, a great deal. The book suffers from so many grave defects of an evidential, logical and methodological character as to render it unreliable both for fact and interpretation. Stating such a verdict flatly, while being unable for reasons of space to bring full evidence for it, is uncomfortable. Since it is not possible to comment inclusively on over 900 pages of text in a review of a few thousand words, only a few of the book's technical historical flaws, though they are crucially important, can be discussed.

The first of these is inadequate research. Sixty pages of notes and eleven of bibliography may seem impressive, but

the reading required to undergird so sweeping a reinterpretation of history as Bobbitt offers would have to be at least ten times as great and yet also more discriminating—a nearly superhuman demand, to be sure, but one that is inseparable from the undertaking. Apart from discussions of Bobbitt's specialty, constitutional law, the only topic among the many huge, controversial ones he discusses on which his reading is adequate is that on the 15th–18th century revolutions in military affairs.

Inadequate research contributes to other defects but cannot wholly account for them. Ungrounded generalizations, naked assertions, logical leaps, vague language, conceptual confusion, contradictions, arbitrary definitions, exaggerations and distortions, and major omissions of vital material abound. Then there is the problem of outright factual errors.

Factual errors are bound to occur in any book as broad and ambitious as this one. What counts is the level of their incidence and significance, and it is unacceptably high. Some errors do not directly affect the overall theses, but others demonstrate a general misconception of a problem important to the story. As to the former, for example, when Bobbitt writes that in 1798–99 France attacked and conquered Switzerland, the Papal States, Piedmont-Sardinia and Naples (which is like saying that the Soviet Union in 1947–48 attacked and conquered Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary), the factual error shows only that he misunderstands the nature of French expansion and the allied response in a crucial period of one of his epochal wars. But the statement that after 1815 the majority of Poles lived under Prussian and Austrian (rather than Russian) rule is not an incidental error. It shows that the author cannot have understood the Polish question either in its domestic or international aspects. It would be like trying to understand the American race problem if

one believed that after 1865 the majority of freed blacks lived in the North.

Still other errors reveal the vagueness and vacuity of certain core concepts. When Bobbitt writes that the Congress of Vienna “recognized the state of Switzerland as a single state-nation”, he demonstrates not only a misconception of what the Congress did, but the meaninglessness of his category of the state-nation.¹ Similarly, when Bobbitt contends that Russia was able to withstand Napoleon’s onslaught in 1812 through strategic retreat because “she [Russia] was not a territorial state, and her dynasty did not constitutionally depend on the support of the nobility and the army”, he not only gives an absurd explanation for the strategic and tactical decisions made in 1812 and betrays an ignorance of major facts about Russian history,² but again demonstrates how malleable and hence meaningless his concept of the “territorial state” is.

Finally, certain factual errors reveal misconceptions so basic that they raise questions as to the author’s ability to deal with a whole complex of central problems and issues. Bobbitt describes European feelings about war and peace at the end of the 19th century as follows: “There seems to have been widespread agreement on two expectations: that science and technology would make war impossible and that international law would govern the relationships between states.” This is like saying that the general late 19th-century view on the solar system was that the sun revolved around the earth. A misconception so fundamental and so contradictory to central, well-known facts established by a massive literature disqualifies Bobbitt from being taken seriously on the international order in prewar Europe or the origins of World War I, the start of the most important of his epochal wars.

Even more disturbing in certain ways than factual errors are instances of Bobbitt’s twisting the clear meaning of

evidence to fit his theory. Two examples: he praises Hedley Bull’s “path-breaking” book, *The Anarchical Society*, for describing the international world in Hobbesian terms as without law, “a world of all against all and each one against every other one.” Bull’s book was indeed important—for precisely the opposite reason. His whole emphasis was on the international system as a *society*, anarchical solely in the sense of having no recognized law-giver but otherwise involving real community, norms, rules and elements of law. Bobbitt similarly takes a statement by Bismarck defending his policy of pure *Realpolitik* in the interests of Prussia against his opponents’ charge of lack of principle and makes it into something Bismarck then opposed: a manifesto for nationalism as “the authentic voice of the nation-state.”

A Reach Too Far

INSTANCES of Bobbitt’s bad scholarship could be multiplied, but simply to indict the book in that fashion ignores the big picture: the book’s theses and argument. Could they not be mainly right and very much worth think-

¹If one can call the Swiss Confederation of 22 independent cantons legitimated and neutralized by international treaties under guarantee of the great powers a state-nation—meaning a state acquiring its legitimacy by forming its people into a nation and putting the people at the service of the state—then one can do anything.

²The Russian government aspired to improve its efficiency every bit as much as 18th-century Prussia or Austria; Peter the Great and Catherine II were enlightened despots in the same mold as Frederick II or Joseph II. The statement that its dynasty did not depend on the support of the nobility and army—in light of the history of Russia’s 18th- and 19th-century crises—is nonsense.

ing about, even if Bobbitt is not a good historian? A good question; but the answer is no. The broad scheme of war, peace and the course of history given here is equally flawed. It is, in fine, an imposing fortress of papier-maché.

The first problem is that nothing in Bobbitt's very grand scheme is ever proved. Nothing major in it—neither categories, concepts, fundamental assumptions, alleged links and causal connections nor definitions of critical terms—is rigorously analyzed, hypothesized and operationalized. Nor is any of it tested against contrary evidence and alternative views and shown to be more solidly based than competing schemes and interpretations. If one believes it, one does so essentially because it looks good, or because one wishes to believe it.

The second point is that under close examination the grand scheme falls apart. Central categories develop fissures and cracks and their contents leak out and mingle with others. Crucial concepts, when tested, prove tautological or simply empty. Vital causal connections and links between phenomena in different spheres prove nonexistent or unconvincing. Major generalizations central to it prove untenable. An example: One of Bobbitt's main contentions is that epochal wars and their peace settlements establish the dominant constitutional form of the state and the constitution of an era's society of states. The first of these, the Habsburg-Valois wars and the Peace of Augsburg, meet none of the requirements of the theory. These wars were not epochal but local and sporadic, and did not end in 1555 but continued underground until once more breaking out openly in the 1630s and ending in 1659. The Peace of Augsburg had nothing to do with them; it established only a temporary and unstable truce in Germany's religious conflicts, and led to no new constitutional order either in Germany or elsewhere.

Or take Bobbitt's concepts of different state constitutions—princely, kingly, territorial and so forth. Not only is each of these fuzzy in definition and the distinctions drawn between them arbitrary and artificial, but at least one and perhaps two (the state-nation and the territorial state) are figments of Bobbitt's imagination, corresponding to no historical reality whatsoever. Of the five great powers at the Vienna Congress that supposedly established and legitimated the dominant state-nation form, not one remotely fits his definition of it—and not one wanted or dared to do after 1815 what he says state-nations do, which is to put their people at the service of the state. As for the territorial state, its supposed legitimating principle—the more efficient use of the state's resources—would fit some states and not others in any era; and some of the central defining characteristics Bobbitt ascribes to its era as opposed to others (e.g., the unimportance of dynastic succession, a coolly rational secularism in regard to religion, and the waging of only limited cabinet wars) are all flatly untrue.

Indeed, the whole notion that each different constitutional form of the state rests on a particular distinctive legitimating principle—so that nation-states try to maximize the welfare of all their citizens while market-states try to maximize opportunity—is unhistorical to the point of absurdity. Had Bobbitt done any serious study of his 18th-century territorial states, he would have seen that many of them, at least, saw their *raison d'être* in promoting the welfare of all their subjects as they saw it, and they tried to do so in part by maximizing their opportunities within the established order.³

³See, for example, Marc Raeff, *The Well-Ordered Police State* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983); and C.B.A. Behrens, *Society, Government, and the Enlightenment* (New York: HarperCollins, 1985).

Alas, most instances of incoherence and conceptual confusion in *The Shield of Achilles* come down, ultimately, to the central one involving Bobbitt's notion of what drives the course of history. He vastly exaggerates and distorts the roles of war and peace settlements in constituting states and the international system. Yes, states to a considerable degree are *made* by and for war; but states *exist and endure* by and for governance. The constitutional changes that states have undergone over time (in a way far more uneven, contingent and complex than Bobbitt indicates) have had more to do overall with trying to meet challenges of governance than those of war, and those demands, while changing enormously in detail over time, remain essentially the same in kind: order, welfare and legitimacy. How rulers, governments and peoples conceive and try to meet these needs varies; their need to do so in order to endure remains constant.

As for epochal wars and major peace settlements settling major questions about the international order, yes, they sometimes have—but mostly in a negative rather than positive way, doing more to clear the ground and establish what cannot be done than to establish what the new order will be. This is true of all the genuine epochal wars and peace settlements that Bobbitt discusses. The Thirty Years War, for example, ended any possibility of Spanish Habsburg dominance in Europe as a whole and of Austrian Habsburg-Imperial-Catholic rule in Germany; it thereby cleared the way for France's rise and for a different kind of confessional though not secular order for Germany. *Mutatis mutandis*, the same holds for the War of the Spanish Succession and the Peace of Utrecht: they ended Louis XIV's bid for hegemony and opened the way for a balance of power system, but they did not really establish it. That took 15 years of further war, crises, major adjustments and new or revised set-

tlements. The same holds even for the far greater French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars and the most ambitious and comprehensive peace settlement ever attempted, at the Congress of Vienna. Together they ended the Napoleonic bid for empire and laid the basis for a new order based on legality and solidarity, but even this genuine effort to solve all Europe's problems at once did not really establish a durable constitutional order *per se*. Within five years the solidarity eroded; within 15 the settlement underwent major challenges and revisions.

This points up a further weakness in Bobbitt's world-historical scheme: its neglect of what follows the epochal wars and peace settlements he tries to link too neatly together. What counts most in every case is not simply the war itself and its results, or the provisions of the peace settlement, but what actually happens thereafter, what states and peoples do with the opportunities and challenges presented. In other words, the determinist strategic-constitutional paradigm makes less difference than the contingent responses and adaptations made by many different actors.

The same observation applies to Bobbitt's epochal war and settlement, the supposed single Long War of 1914–90 between parliamentarianism, fascism and communism over which would be the dominant constitutional form of the nation-state. In the end, words are defenseless things, and so is history, at least in some hands. Anyone may choose to see this period as one long war over this central issue if one wishes. But this pattern may not be used to explain the origins of World War I and II, as Bobbitt seeks to do, or explain away the great issue that was settled by those wars and the settlement of 1945. World War I was not caused by a clash between supposedly proto-fascist Germany and parliamentary France and

Britain. The war arose out of power-political strategic rivalry between Germany, Austria-Hungary and Russia, resulting from the fatal breakdown of their long triangular restraining alliance and leading to an acute security crisis for all three—especially for Austria-Hungary, which actually precipitated the war. The confrontation between parliamentarianism, fascism and communism was one *result* of the war, not its cause; and it was not the chief issue or cause of World War II either. In both wars, the central issue was a German bid to dominate the continent by power-political means, and that issue was finally solved once and for all in 1945. In the most important sense, therefore, 1914–90 was not one Long War.

A Saving Grace?

ONE QUESTION remains: If the main historical paradigm is not sound or helpful, what about the argument for an emerging new order based on a new kind of state, the market-state, and Bobbitt's discussion of new policies, strategies and paradigms necessary for that new era? How much is that worth?

Many of Bobbitt's individual thoughts and arguments seem to me sensible and insightful, many others foolish, some wrong, and one or two dangerous and even a bit sinister. The problem, however, once again, is that the whole discussion of the emerging market-state and the market-state international system is one long question-begging exercise; it assumes the point at issue that needs to be proved and argues from it as though it had been proved. Bobbitt greatly exaggerates the death of the nation-state, but more important, he does not render even comprehensible, much less probable or proved, the emergence and existence—

indeed, the very definition and possibility—of his market-state. It is never defined by anything more concrete than an advertising slogan—"maximizing opportunity for all its citizens"—as if that were not a means by which many states of various kinds have often tried to promote welfare, improve their powers to govern and gain legitimacy. No serious attempt is made to show that the market, efficient for individual and corporate economic activity, can be made the basis for the governance of the state. The main evidence given for its emergence consists of selected extracts from speeches and press releases by Bill Clinton and Tony Blair, and the evidence offered to show that the historic transition to it has occurred is almost too ludicrous to discuss: the difference between the UN–NATO failure to stop the Bosnian Serb massacres at Srebrenica, supposed to prove the failure of nation-state principles to meet problems arising from nationhood, and NATO's intervention to stop Serbian "ethnic cleansing" in Kosovo three years later, supposed to arise from new market-state principles. This is like arguing that the shift from Anglo-French appeasement of Hitler beginning in 1936 and the decision for war in 1939 shows a fundamental shift in the constitution of the society of states.

Readers may choose to believe that a new market-state society of states is emerging, and they may read this book for counsel on how to meet its challenges. They should not believe, however, that the course of history supports this prophecy. □

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A Matter of Writing Life and Death

Michael P. McDonald

Carole Angier, *The Double Bond: Primo Levi* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2002), 898 pp., \$40.

Ian Thomson, *Primo Levi* (London: Hutchinson, 2002), 624 pp., £25.

PRIMO LEVI (1919–87) was a largely autobiographical writer who, in addition to being a chemist, led a third career as a public witness to the Nazi atrocities at Auschwitz. The facts of his life, much like his prose, are simple and straightforward.

Levi was born in Turin on July 31, 1919 and, with two exceptions (work in Milan at the outset of the Second World War and his imprisonment at Auschwitz), he lived in the same apartment his entire life. His family came from the Piedmont countryside, having moved to Turin near the turn of the century. Levi's parents were both culturally assimilated Jews and the prevailing tone in the household was one of irreligion. The family was well off and Levi grew up amid affluence and comfort, in every respect a typical *ragazzo borghese italiano*.

Levi attended the Liceo Massimo D'Azeglio, a secondary school noted for its academic excellence, along with the scions of Turin's bourgeoisie. Children of Levi's generation received a rigorous classical education and, from an early age, Levi was an indefatigable bookworm, what the Italians call a *violino*. But rather than seek a career in the humanities, Levi chose chemistry when he enrolled at the University of Turin in 1937. Because he had entered a year before the enactment of the Fascist racial laws, which, along with other restrictions, prohibited Italian Jews from attending public schools, he

was allowed to complete his studies. He was graduated *summa cum laude* in 1941 and later in life became an international authority on synthetic wire enamels.

Until his early twenties, Levi had little reason to reflect upon his roots. Like most Italian Jews, he considered himself an integral part of the society, and with good reason: Jews had been present in Italy since before the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E. Of more immediate relevance, more than one-third of Italian Jewish adults were members of the Fascist Party.¹ All this changed with the introduction of the racial laws in September 1938. From that point forward, as Mussolini "irrevocably yoked his carnival chariot to Hitler's funeral hearse", in the bitingly apt words of Elsa Morante, Levi began to take an interest in Jewish culture.

In September 1943, following the fall of the Fascist regime, the Germans created the puppet government known as the Republic of Salò and installed Mussolini, whom they had rescued from prison, at its head. Civil war broke out in Italy and, with the German army in control of much of central and northern Italy, the ethnic cleansing began. Nearly 6,400 Italian Jews (out of a population of 45,000) were deported, mainly to the camps of Auschwitz, Birkenau and Mauthausen.

According to his postwar military papers, Levi joined a small Resistance group stationed in the Aosta region north of Turin on October 1, 1943. Unfortunately, he took up arms at a time when the partisan movement lacked organization and was easily infiltrated. A Fascist agent betrayed

¹In an interesting aside, Thomson notes that a first cousin of Levi's, once removed, helped found the Fascist Party in 1919.

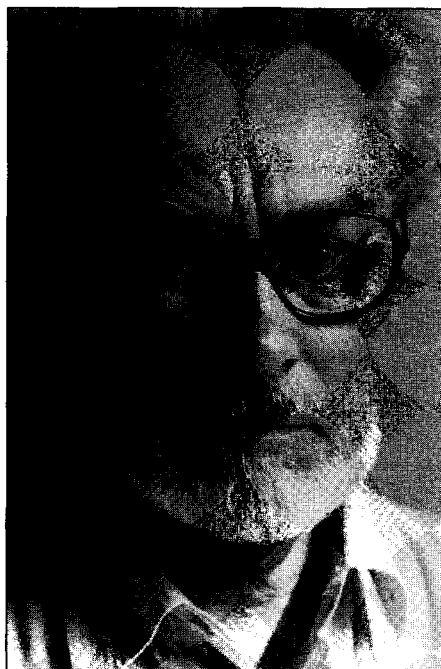
Levi's band, which was captured in the first anti-Fascist round up in Occupied Italy. Levi was 24 years old when he was seized and, after declaring himself to be Jewish, shipped to Auschwitz in a cattle car. Of the 650 people who traveled with him only 24 returned home.

The average life expectancy in the auxiliary work camp of the sprawling Auschwitz complex to which Levi was sent was three months. But thanks to luck, friendship and a driving need to understand and to testify, Levi, who became *Häftling* (prisoner) 174517, survived his ordeal for eleven months, from February 1944 to January 1945. He returned to his apartment in Turin wearing the uniform of his Red Army liberators in October 1945.

Sixteen weeks after his homecoming, Levi began the book for which he is most famous, *Se questo è un uomo* ("If this is a Man", which appears in its American translation under the unbecoming title of *Survival in Auschwitz*), an account of his experiences in the *anus mundi* of Auschwitz. After being rejected out of hand by several large publishing houses, a small press issued the book to critical and public indifference in 1947. In the meantime, once reintegrated into postwar life, Levi married and began work for a local paint company. In June 1958, as the 20th anniversary of Mussolini's race laws approached, the prestigious Turin publishing house of Einaudi agreed to republish *Se questo è un uomo*. This event, and the much warmer reception the book received the second time around, encouraged Levi

to return to writing. In 1963 Einaudi published *La tregua* ("The Truce", published in the United States as *The Reawakening*), Levi's colorful account of his picaresque odyssey home from Auschwitz. The book's overwhelmingly positive critical reception and impressive sales marked the beginning of his fame in Italy. Over the next decade, Levi wrote at night after ten hour workdays, and gained increasing visibility as a writer of the first rank.

Levi's best known books include *La chiave a stella* ("The Star-Shaped Key", published in English as *The Monkey's Wrench*), a fictional account of a Piedmontese crane-rigger who travels the world as a skilled worker; *Se non ora, quando?* (*If not now, when?*), a novel about Jewish partisans during World War II in Eastern Europe; and, of course, *Il sistema periodico* (*The Periodic Table*), the autobiographical collection of stories that boosted his international reputation, especially in the United



CORBIS

Primo Levi in 1986

States. Levi became a regular contributor to *La Stampa* in the early 1960s, which enabled him to write short articles and essays, in the manner of Orwell's "As I Please" columns, on all manner of subjects that interested him. In 1975 he took early retirement to be able to write full-time.

Levi's last book, *I sommersi e i salvati* (*The Drowned and the Saved*), published in 1986, one year before his death, is perhaps the most incisive of all his Holocaust works. It is in several ways a continuation of *Se questo è un uomo*, but it allies the rigorous descriptive prose of that initial work with a deeper meditation on the

complex, often ambiguous relationships between oppressor and victim in the Nazi death camps. That same year rumors began to circulate of Levi's soon receiving the Nobel prize. Instead, the world was shocked to read on April 11, 1987 that Primo Levi had died at the age of 68 after falling 15 meters head-first down the stairwell of his apartment building onto a marble floor. Although some thought it an accident, a Turin court and most of those closest to Levi believed otherwise.

PRIMO LEVI has already told us a great deal about his life in his publications and interviews. Is there any need for biographies? Not really. Apart from his internment at Auschwitz and his return home, Levi lived an unremarkable life. To learn about those two great experiences, and how he reacted to them, one has only to read him. But the fact of his apparent suicide created a mystery and, in the 15 years since Levi's death, has provided ample justification for biographers to travel to Turin to untangle it.

Three monumental biographies of Levi's life are currently available in English. The first, Myriam Anissimov's 452-page *Primo Levi: Tragedy of an Optimist*, appeared in 1999. Rightly criticized for the uninspired way in which it surrounded paraphrases of what Levi wrote with large, undigested chunks of general material dealing with Italian Jewry, the Fascist race laws and the post-war Italian boom, it was inevitable that other biographers (or, as Joyce would have it, "biografiends") would follow.² Enter Carole Angier and Ian Thomson, whose large, off-putting housebricks of books—what Italians would call *mattoni*—have both appeared this year. Due credit should be given to their respective publishing houses for confirming (as if further proof were necessary) the decline of editing practices; either tome could have been condensed by a third or more with-

out losing anything much, if at all, of substance.

The books have a good deal in common: Both took ten years to write and are the product of hundreds of interviews. (Thomson actually met Levi a year prior to his death; Angier never did.) Both give the reader a feel for what Turin, that most un-Italian of the peninsula's great cities, is like. Both agree that Levi was a mother's boy (Thomson: he had a "diffident, feminine nature"; Angier: he was "full of male self-doubts") whose "low spirits" as an adolescent later developed into a recurrent depressive illness.³ In addition to sharing a congruent view of Levi's underlying personal insecurities, both biographers rely upon similar leitmotifs to bind their narratives together. For example, they each maintain that, throughout his life, Levi sought out extroverted, rugged friends who could supply the other half of what was missing in his own make-up.⁴ Regrettably, however, both writers, particularly Angier, cannot seem to resist the boring biographical game of "gotcha." If Levi has not been entirely accurate (as

²For a sharp assesment of Anissimov's book and an elegant overview of Levi's life and significance, see Tony Judt, "The Courage of the Elementary", *New York Review of Books*, May 20, 1999.

³Levi was personally acquainted with at least eleven suicides during his life, in addition to having a grandfather who committed suicide by jumping out of a window. This, together with the evidence provided by both Thompson and Angier that Levi had several times contemplated suicide even before Auschwitz, obviously strengthens the view that his death fall was no accident.

⁴One learns from these books that Levi was so small and weak as a boy that Jews and Gentiles alike teased him at school. This, in turn, seems to have led him to become so restrained as an adult that, unlike most Italians, he spoke without hand gestures.

they see it) in his depiction of a person or event, one or the other is sure to point out the discrepancy, no matter how trivial. Levi, of course, was perfectly aware that the best a writer can hope for, no matter how scrupulous his use of language, is to recount events or situations in a true but necessarily “filtered” way.

It is mostly in retelling the story of Levi’s last two decades that these books add to the record Levi left behind. Angier and Thomson chart his intermittent use of tranquilizers and anti-depressants; his struggle for literary recognition as a creative writer rather than “mere” memorialist; his various psychosomatic fears—for example, of Alzheimer’s disease when he was only fifty, and his progressive disaffection with married and family life. We also learn that he had planned, but never completed, an autobiographical sequel to *The Periodic Table* and hoped to write an account of those German industries involved in the Nazi camps.

As for his death, both writers are convinced that Levi committed suicide. Angier puts the blame squarely on his chronic depression and terrible domestic situation, living in a cramped apartment with his estranged wife and children, as well as his ailing mother and mother-in-law. Thomson argues more broadly that his suicide was provoked by “a complex web of factors”: his clinical depression, his mother’s illness, the tide of historical revisionism with respect to Nazism, fascism and the Holocaust that was beginning to take root in Europe in the 1980s, his fears of mental incompetence and cancer and, perhaps, his survivor’s guilt.

Of the two books, Thomson’s is the more readable. He uses language without pretension and, for the most part, avoids undue speculation about hidden facets of Levi’s career. This is not to say that his biography is without faults; for example, he betrays his mildly leftist political sympathies by never missing an opportunity

to single out Italy’s Christian Democratic Party for special abuse or to suggest, contrary to historical evidence, that throughout the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s Italy stood precariously on the verge of a neo-fascist coup. Thomson also overstates the degree to which Levi was anti-American and anti-Israeli. Levi did object to American pop culture (who can blame him?), which he believed had filled Italians’ “heads with rubbish.” But there is no “pronounced anti-American streak” detectable in either his life or public utterances. Indeed, he spoke admiringly of America as an “example” to other nations in the treatment to be afforded foreign immigrants. As for Israel, Levi did grow increasingly unhappy with what he perceived to be the nation’s progressive militarization after the Six Day War. He sharply disapproved of Israeli Prime Minister Menahem Begin’s government and its use of the rhetoric of Nazi victimization to justify the repression of Palestinians. Levi was ashamed when Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982 and later said that the Phalangist massacre at Sabra and Chatila had “polluted” the image of Jews throughout the world. That said, Levi was unwavering in his support for the necessity of Israel to exist, opposed contacts with the PLO as long as it refused to renounce terrorism, maintained that Israel must be defended, and took very strong exception to those who compared the fate of the Palestinians living in Gaza and in the West Bank under Israeli rule to that of the Jews under Nazism.

Less serious, but irritating nonetheless, is Thomson’s cultural leftism, manifest, for example, in his apparent belief that the release of Beatles LPs can be used to mark social watersheds. Similarly, in one of his few attempts at literary criticism, Thomson reproaches Levi for failing to appreciate what he terms the modernist aesthetic of fragmentation and inaccessibility: “This conservative anti-

“was one of his least attractive characteristics.” Really? I suspect that most admirers of Levi’s clear, communicative prose see it as one of his most attractive characteristics.

ANGIER’S TOME evinces other sorts of defects, though they are no less off-putting. Much like those ghastly telemarketers who phone you in the guise of friends doing you a favor, she has the annoying habit of referring to Levi on a first-name basis. And as with telemarketers, she prattles on beyond all reason and tolerance. In her endless retellings of *her* encounters with secondary friends and acquaintances of Levi, she exhibits what Henry James in *The Aspern Papers* described as “the most fatal of human passions: not knowing where to stop.” What should be *obiter dicta* ends up becoming *omnia dicta* as Angier makes us privy to her every thought. Thus, when she meets a school friend whom she suspects bullied Levi in his youth, we are treated to a Hamlet-like *monologue intérieur* on the order of: “Shall I challenge him? Shall I ask straight out—did you bully Primo Levi for being more monster than man?”

Angier is also given to melodramatic overstatements usually introduced by “surely.” (“Surely this wasn’t the whole story.” “Surely the similarities are more than coincidental?” “Surely he feared that . . .”) She is also prone to sententious pronouncements that come off sounding like parodies of Zen koans: “If you make your child unable to love anyone but you, he will not be able to love you either.” Combined with her penchant for pseudopsychological labels—in short order she informs us that Levi had a “success complex”, an “attention complex”, and a “fame complex”; indeed, every type of complex except a high-rise complex—and statements that are simply over the top (“he longed intensely for sex—and probably

indiscriminately too”), one is left all but hoping for a telemarketer to call, just to interrupt her driveling on. This is a pity: Angier is obviously intelligent and can write with grace and precision when she tries. She well understands, for example, that: “If there is one way to describe the whole of [Levi’s] work, it is this: it seeks out his opposite, even his enemy—human, animal and material—in order to cross the gap between them, to explore and understand them, to find a connection.” Moreover, she does a much better job than Thomson, who hardly bothers, at offering imaginative, if not always convincing, readings of Levi’s fiction.

But when all is said and done, the value of any biography lies in its ability to illuminate unexpected relationships either between past and present, or, in the case of a literary subject, between a writer’s life and work. Regrettably, neither book under review offers any such compelling connections. Angier in particular hinders a deeper understanding of Levi’s work because she reduces too much of what he wrote to personal neuroses and sexual repression. In so doing she becomes a prime example of the type of biographer Nabokov termed a “psycho-plagiarist.” Angier remarks early on that “biography is not much appreciated in Italy.” If translated into Italian, her book will certainly do much to confirm the antipathy.

A READER MIGHT come away from these biographies believing that Primo Levi, a gifted writer, was nonetheless a neurotic man whose importance is largely confined to Holocaust studies. This would be worse than a mistake; it would be a missed opportunity.

In different parts of the world, various communities are again being persecuted, tortured and ethnically cleansed. The ongoing reversion to mass murder and the ubiquitous use of hunger and imprisonment as political instruments mark a

onment as political instruments mark a continuing crisis of culture and reason to which Levi's testimony about the death camps remains relevant. But Levi's books also speak to certain specific violations of human dignity that are to be found even in the peace and affluence of contemporary America and Europe.

In his recent look at Nazism, Michael Burleigh observes how an unnamed reporter

compared the process of Nazism's moral transformation of German society to rebuilding a railway bridge. Engineers could not simply demolish an existing structure, because of the impact on rail traffic. Instead, they slowly renewed each bolt, girder and rail, work that hardly caused passengers to glance up from their newspapers. However, one day, they would realize that the old bridge had gone and a new structure stood in its stead.⁵

This metaphor of incremental social subversion helps us to understand why feel-good but fuzzy humanistic standards of conduct ultimately proved so fragile a barrier against political brutality in Germany; but it should also keep us vigilant against the molecule by molecule moral substitutions slowly seeping into our own society.

At the end of World War II, Nazism became the damned part of Western civilization, the *nec plus ultra* of evil, so much so that there was not much psychic room left for other, yet unburied evils (communism, for example). But as with most other examples of self-evident consensus, the Sixties said goodbye to all that. Saul Friedländer was among the first to note "a new discourse about Nazism on the Right as well as on the Left" that was gaining ground, "an aesthetic re-elaboration" beyond ideology in such films as Hans-Jürgen Syberberg's *Hitler, a Film from Germany* and Liliana Cavani's *The Night*

Porter.⁶ Primo Levi, too, published caustic attacks on films that he believed falsified the nature of Nazi violence. Sadly, though, "swastika chic" and its accompanying moral idiocies seem more endemic in the West now than when he wrote. Consider three recent events.

As reported in the August 20 *New York Times*, filming is set to start in a few months on a four-hour CBS mini-series based on the life of Hitler before his ascension to power in 1933. Nancy Tellem, president of CBS Entertainment, has suggested that people have been so "focused on Hitler and the involvement in World War II and the concentration camps" that they have overlooked the other Hitler who rose to power from humble beginnings. "[H]ow Hitler became Hitler, I think it's unbelievably compelling", she gushed. According to a former CBS executive who has seen the script, Hitler is presented as a bit "idiosyncratic, odd" but overall the film will resemble *Rocky*, in which a boxer triumphs against the odds.⁷

Then there is "Mirroring Evil: Nazi Imagery/Recent Art", an exhibition recently hosted by the Jewish Museum in New York City. As the title suggests, the show featured 13 contemporary conceptual artists—some of whom are descended from families of Holocaust victims—who use Nazi era imagery to "invite the viewer to identify with the perpetrators." The "art" consisted of such puerile constructions as a series of faux LEGO boxes with pictures of miniature concentration camps made out of the children's play

⁵Burleigh, *The Third Reich: A New History* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2000), p. 6.

⁶Friedländer, *Reflections of Nazism: An Essay on Kitsch and Death* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984).

⁷Bernard Weinraub, "Planned Mini-Series on Hitler's Early Life Brings Criticism", *New York Times*, August 20, 2002.

decked out in the signature colors and logos of luxury-goods stores such as Tiffany's and Chanel. Such meretricious kitsch is what we have come to expect of the art scene and is easily dismissed. Not so the catalogue that accompanied the exhibition.⁸

As to be expected, the catalogue evinces a self-congratulatory tone that enthuses both about "a groundbreaking exhibition . . . filled with difficult, challenging art" and "the courage" of the show's artists, curators and organizers. One reads the by-now stock phrases about "multivalent meanings", "transgressive modes of presentation" and the necessity of crossing "taboo confines" by means of "taboo images." Lacan, Foucault, Bataille, Adorno, Horkheimer, Derrida—all the Academy's beloved continental thinkers—dutifully put in an appearance at some point. The result is that an asinine ("Were Nazis beautiful?"), condescending (these artists are out to "complicate the secure divide between good and evil that Western culture so comfortably assumes"), or offensive ("By teaching the Holocaust we have made it boring") remark appears on almost every page. And yet, somehow, every now and then, a bit of honesty breaks through:

Work about the Nazi and Holocaust era is part of a larger body of contemporary art that reflects today's historical amnesia and how current events have rewritten what we had assumed to be historical gospel. . . . Distance from historical events and divergent attitudes among different generations are clearly central to the changing and contentious definitions of experience and memory. . . . Until these artists came along, representing the Holocaust playfully had been taboo. Now it seems that a new generation of artists can relate to the Holocaust only [sic] in the mode of play.⁹

One of the writers in the catalogue

refers to ours as "a post-Holocaust culture", the suggestion seeming to be that we are "post" not in the chronological sense of "coming-after", but in a psychological sense of being "past" or "over it." Another of the catalogue's contributors complains that there has been too much rational information and education about the Holocaust and opines, incredibly:

In the face of that overdose, 'ignorance' is needed. An ignorance, not in terms of information about the Holocaust but of everything that stands in the way of a 'felt knowledge' of the emotions these events entailed.¹⁰

Well, not all emotions; just those of the perpetrators.

Over the years, Levi developed what he called an "allergy" toward the pop Sixties sociology that facilely equated Italian factories with Nazi camps. He believed that graffiti of the sort "FIAT=Auschwitz" only degraded the survivors' experience. It is not difficult to know, therefore, what he would think of a statement made by Tom Sachs, the creator of "Prada Deathcamp", another work in the Jewish Museum show, to a *New York Times* reporter: "I'm using the iconography of the Holocaust to bring attention to fashion. Fashion, like fascism, is about loss of identity."¹¹

Finally, consider "Body Worlds", an exhibition that consists of human bodies that have been flayed, preserved and put on display. The exhibition, which has attracted 8.5 million visitors since it began touring in 1996, is currently a hit in London and will be travelling soon to

⁸Norman L. Kleeblatt, ed., *Mirroring Evil: Nazi Imagery/Recent Art* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002).

⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 4, 69.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 82.

¹¹See "Designer Death Camp", *New York Times Sunday Magazine*, March 10, 2002, pp. 18–19.

the United States. A German anatomist by the name of Gunther von Hagens is the brains behind the exhibit, having perfected a novel means of exhibiting cadavers by replacing body fluids with plastic. Keep in mind that the bodies, though they look like models, are those of once living, real human beings. One of the "exhibits" is of a pregnant woman with her womb exposed to reveal a seven-month-old fetus. According to one account, she is "put in a position with one hand behind her head that makes her look like she is posing for *Playboy*. But her chest is slit down the middle, and you see the curled-up fetus in her womb."¹²

Von Hagens argues that his displays provide unique insights into the human body; he says that he is out to "enlighten people by means of aesthetic shock" and claims to be "honored" by what little controversy his freak show has generated. Of course, he has also enriched himself in the process, making, by some estimates, more than \$100 million. In a sane world, von Hagens would be prosecuted for desecrating corpses, but for the fact that he has received prior legal consent from the deceased to exhibit them in this way. Too bad for von Hagens that Dr. Kevorkian is in jail; otherwise the twisted American doctor could supply the bodies directly to his German colleague without having to wait for them to die of natural causes.

Again, there is little doubt how Levi would react to "Body Worlds." When an exhibition of antique torture instruments arrived in Turin in the 1980s, Levi visited it for *La Stampa*. Thomson reports that seeing the leg-locks, thumb-screws and the like, "all fetishistically displayed in Turin's Museum of Fine Art, Levi felt disgusted. His review of the exhibition . . . evinced a *saeva indignatio* worthy of Dickens." Levi excoriated the curators for their opportunism and castigated the European collectors who had loaned the instruments to make money.

THANKS TO such efforts as *The New Republic's* "Idiocy Watch" in the wake of September 11, we know how blasé many of our leading intellectual luminaries have become about mass murder. Yet movies and exhibitions of the kind referred to above make clear that such moral obtuseness is not the exclusive preserve of highbrows and that the moral transformation Burleigh described in Germany is again at work in the West. Just as fascist writers such as Ernst Jünger in Germany and Gabriele D'Annunzio in Italy did much to deaden moral sensibilities by aestheticizing violence in the years leading up to World War II, so too contemporary gallery owners and hip young film makers (one thinks inevitably of Quentin Tarantino) are doing much the same to us today. Which helps explain why it has become increasingly hard for many people to keep the plain hideousness of planned mass murder in sharp focus. To a shocking extent, even September 11, 2001 has already been archived, aestheticized and taken variously to the bank. And yet the shrug-of-the-shoulder reaction to this type of horror is a terrible thing and represents a radical defeat of human sensibility.

À propos of September 11, Walter Laqueur has observed that "there has been a cult of sacrificial death in battle in the history of most peoples all through recorded history", but it was Nazism that, in modern times, gave "strong impetus to this cult."¹³ The Holocaust was the central revealed truth about that criminal regime, and Levi is the indispensable writer for understanding it. Any attempt to keep a modern form of humanism afloat will, as Tzvetan Todorov wrote recently, "far

¹²Ian Youngs, "Corpse show leaves sour taste", BBC News Online, March 22, 2002.

¹³Laqueur, "Life as a weapon", *Times Literary Supplement*, September 3, 2002, pp. 3–4.

from ignoring Auschwitz and Kolyma, take them as a starting point.”¹⁴ To help to retain our humanity, to avoid a recrudescence of the brutalization of manners that occurred in civilized nations during the last century, and to

¹⁴Todorov, *The Imperfect Garden: The Legacy of Humanism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), p. 233.

prevent seemingly fixed moral thresholds from evaporating before our eyes, we can do no better than to read Primo Levi. His biographies, on the other hand, we can skip. □

Michael P. McDonald founded the Center for Individual Rights in Washington, DC and holds a Ph.D. in Romance Languages and Literatures.

Not to Notice

In January 1941 the fate of Europe and the world seemed to be sealed. Only the deluded could still think that Germany would not win; the stolid English “had not noticed that they had lost the game”, and obstinately resisted under the bombings; but they were alone and suffered bloody losses on all fronts. Only a voluntarily deaf and blind man could have any doubts about the fate reserved for the Jews in a German Europe: we had read Feuchtwanger’s *Oppermanns*, smuggled secretly in from France, and a British White Book, which arrived from Palestine and described the “Nazi atrocities”; we had only believed half of it, but that was enough. Many refugees from Poland and France had reached Italy, and we had talked with them: they did not know the details of the slaughters that were taking place behind a monstrous curtain of silence, but each of them was a messenger, like those who run to Job to tell him, “I alone have escaped to tell you the story.”

And yet, if we wanted to live, if we wished in some way to take advantage of the youth coursing through our veins, there was indeed no other resource than self-imposed blindness; like the English, “we did not notice”, we pushed all dangers into the limbo of things not perceived or immediately forgotten. . . .

Neither in us nor, more generally, in our generation, whether “Aryan” or Jew, had the idea yet gained ground that one must and could resist Fascism. Our resistance at the time was passive and was limited to rejection, isolation, and avoiding contamination. The seed of active struggle had not survived down to us, it had been stifled a few years before with the final sweep of the scythe, which had relegated to prison, house arrest, exile, or silence the last Turinese protagonists and witnesses—Einaudi, Ginzburg, Monti, Vittorio Foa, Zini, Carlo Levi. These names said nothing to us, we knew hardly anything about them—the Fascism around us did not have opponents.

—Primo Levi, *The Periodic Table*



Reforging the Atlantic Alliance:

Philip Gordon's "Reforging the Atlantic Alliance" (Fall 2002) is a thoughtful and well-reasoned case for American policy support to the Alliance, but he treads too lightly on the critical importance of military power to NATO's future.

The Alliance still purports to be a military one even though the military capabilities of its European members and Canada are increasingly lagging behind those of the United States. U.S. military power is increasingly the factor that distinguishes NATO from other European institutions such as the European Union and the Organization of Security Cooperation in Europe. That military power gives the Alliance an efficacy in international security affairs that other European institutions lack, as evidenced in the Bosnia and Kosovo conflicts.

The impending expansion of NATO will only accelerate the growing military capabilities gap between the United States and other NATO partners. New mem-

bers bring potentially great security burdens to the Alliance, particularly for ensuring the viability of Article 5 commitments, but have little to offer to NATO's military "tool box", to use Gordon's words. While potential candidates work hard to polish their credentials for NATO candidacy, these efforts substantially slacken after receiving membership. The Czech Republic and Hungary are two such cases, as Charles Gati has noted in these pages ("All That NATO Can Be: To Prague and Beyond", Summer 2002). The problem of "free riders" in NATO is bound to become a larger challenge in today's security environment than it was during the Cold War.

If NATO is to retain its distinctiveness and effectiveness as an instrument of statecraft it must work to bolster a broad spectrum of military capabilities instead of letting the Alliance lapse into a "coalition-facilitating organization" where political rhetoric reigns supreme. Few anticipated in January 1999 that, in a matter of months, NATO would be waging the largest military campaign in its history. The Alliance

might have as little warning for its next conflict and needs now to prepare for meeting tomorrow's military contingencies.

RICHARD L. RUSSELL
National Defense University
Washington, D.C.

(The views expressed are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the National Defense University, the Department of Defense or the U.S. government.)

Our Other Korea Problem:

The trends Nicholas Eberstadt discusses ("Our Other Korea Problem", Fall 2002) are real, but I find the conclusions he reaches from these trends to be overdrawn. American troops aren't leaving Korea anytime soon. The Korean army would be crippled. It is wholly dependent on American forces and the UN command. It lacks any independent history. It follows the American lead on nearly all matters. No Korean president could eviscerate the army and survive in office. Universal military service (and the perennial threat of war) means that, unlike

Americans, all Koreans—especially the moderates and conservatives—take an active interest in military affairs. President Kim and his supporters suffered seriously in the polls and in the papers this summer when, upon North Korea attacking South Korean vessels and killing five ROK sailors, public realization of the Navy's state of disarray grew acute, and waves of anger at the dozing dovish president ensued.

This is not to mention Korean dependency in the fields of finance, investment and international trade upon American economic forbearance and the goodwill of the U.S. Department of Commerce. The poll data are disturbing, the Sunshine Policy is premised on foolishness, and the hulabaloo surrounding extraterritoriality, the rape cases and the deaths of two girls run down by U.S. vehicles are all troubling. Labor unions and students protest wildly over the most minor infractions. The reason, I think, is that we've simply picked a feisty Asian ally. Koreans have always chafed at whatever foreign presence involves itself in peninsular security affairs; that's unlikely to change. The Koreans are fundamentally a very conservative people. I don't think they would make any rash moves on a question so fundamental to their national security.

BRENDAN CONWAY
Seoul, Korea

After Guantanamo:

In "After Guantanamo" (Summer 2002), Jeremy Rabkin argues that the Geneva Conventions and other treaties of international humanitarian law do not automatically bind governments that ratify them. Instead, he contends, they apply a regime of reciprocity in which one party to a conflict is bound by the law only if its opponents follow the same rules.

Convenient as Rabkin's theory would be for those trying to defend the Bush Administration's flouting of the Geneva Conventions in Guantanamo, it flies in the face of the language and history of the conventions. Article 1 of the Geneva Conventions requires governments to respect the conventions' rules "in all circumstances." The obligation is unconditional. No mention is made of reciprocity. The official commentary on the Geneva Conventions makes the same point. Referring to the prominent placement at the beginning of each convention of the duty to apply the convention "in all circumstances", the commentary notes: "By undertaking this obligation at the very outset, the Contracting Parties drew attention to the fact that it is not merely an engagement concluded on the basis of reciprocity, binding each party to the contract only in so far as the other party observes its

obligations. It is rather a series of unilateral engagements solemnly contracted before the world."

The U.S. Military Tribunal stated the rationale for this view on the eve of the adoption of the Geneva Conventions. In the High Command trial just after World War II, the tribunal stated that under general principles of law, an accused does not exculpate himself from a crime by showing that another has committed a similar crime. The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia recently reaffirmed this principle in the Kupreskic case.

Rabkin strains to create a regime of reciprocity because U.S. actions in Guantanamo are so clearly indefensible under the Geneva Conventions themselves. Article 5 of the Third Geneva Convention creates a presumption that captured combatants are entitled to prisoner-of-war status until a competent tribunal determines otherwise. Few doubt that, after the required individualized hearings, autonomous Al-Qaeda forces would be found to fail the test for POW status under Article 4 of the same convention. Most of these Al-Qaeda forces do not bear arms openly, wear distinctive insignia, have a responsible chain of command, or generally respect international humanitarian law. But many Taliban troops, as well as militia operating with them, may well meet Article 4's requirements. Even Rabkin's

concocted reciprocity theory cannot salvage the Bush Administration's conduct with respect to the Taliban detainees at Guantanamo.

Contrary to Rabkin's assertion, the POW designation does not seriously inhibit interrogation. POWs cannot be punished for failing to state more than their name, rank, serial number and date of birth. But ordinary criminal defendants in the United States cannot be punished for refusing to say anything at all. In each case, the incentives of plea-bargaining are permitted to induce cooperation. POW status also does not preclude criminal prosecution for any terrorist act. And POWs who are convicted of a crime need not be repatriated until the end of the armed conflict or their criminal sentence, whichever is later.

The only thing that POW status does preclude is trial before the Bush Administration's substandard military commissions. A tribunal in which the executive serves as both prosecutor and judge—that is, when there is no appeal to the civilian United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces—does not meet the Geneva Conventions' minimum requirements

for the treatment of POWs. We should promote respect for a rule that prohibits such a blatant violation of due process, not try to dance around it, as Rabkin does.

There is one element of truth to Rabkin's reciprocity theory. If the United States, as a long-time promoter of international humanitarian law, flouts the Geneva Conventions, it will weaken these important norms and encourage other governments to violate them as well. That hardly serves the interests of United States and allied service members who face capture by hostile forces. It only serves those in the Bush Administration who seek to escape the constraints of international law regardless of the cost.

KENNETH ROTH
Executive Director
Human Rights Watch

Rabkin replies:

Kenneth Roth's letter is an excellent illustration of the sort of thinking I criticized in my article. Roth insists that adherence to the Geneva Conventions has nothing to do with reciprocity. He claims this is proven by the boilerplate provision in Article 1 (common to all four conven-

tions) that the "High Contracting Parties" agree to be bound by the provisions to which they have agreed. But what have they agreed? Article 2 (also common to all four conventions) stipulates that where a war involves a non-signatory state, the signatory states involved "shall remain bound" to the convention "in their mutual relations" and "shall be bound by the Convention in relation to the said Power [that is, the non-signatory] *if the latter accepts and applies the provisions thereof.*" (emphasis added)

In the late 1970s, many countries subscribed to Additional Protocols, as they were called, extending the protections of the Geneva Conventions to insurgent forces incapable of becoming parties to the conventions, because not yet recognized as states. On Roth's interpretation, this was needless bother because states already subject to the Geneva Conventions were already bound to honor them "in all circumstances"—which presumably would include even military operations against guerilla insurgencies. On Roth's view, moreover, it makes no difference that the United States has declined to ratify these

Letters to the Editor

We welcome brief comments (under 300 words) from our readers.

Due to space constraints, all letters are subject to editorial revision. Remarks should be addressed to:

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Additional Protocols, since we are already bound to honor all provisions of the earlier conventions “in all circumstances.”

I grant that we would not be justified in committing an outright atrocity merely because our enemies had perpetrated such an act against Americans. That is all that Roth proves with his citations from Nuremberg precedents. The question is whether we are bound to observe all the very precise standards of the Geneva Conventions toward forces that are not, in any meaningful sense, adherents to the Geneva standards themselves. According to Roth, we are so bound—but that imposes no additional burdens worth worrying about.

We often induce cooperation from accused felons in our own criminal justice system, Roth argues, so we can do comparable “plea bargaining” with Al-Qaeda and Taliban prisoners. But this argument assumes we are in a position to punish—or threaten to punish—even those who may not have committed personal acts of terror but have been captured while fighting on behalf of larger terrorist entities. Roth, himself, insists that we cannot treat such fighters as inherent war criminals. But that means we can’t bargain with them over their punishment, as we do with accused felons at home. By a plausible reading of Article 17.3 (“Prisoners who refuse to

answer may not be . . . exposed to any . . . disadvantageous treatment of any kind”), we cannot even withhold prison amenities from those who refuse to “bargain” for such things.

Therefore, as I explained in my article, if such prisoners can claim all the protections laid down in the Geneva Conventions, we cannot even provide incentives for them to supply information. In Roth’s view, the Pentagon has tried to retain maneuvering room in dealing with Taliban captives for no good reason. I think the Pentagon is somewhat more qualified to judge our intelligence and security needs in this setting than is Human Rights Watch.

Still, Roth warns us, by failing to observe all aspects of the Geneva Conventions, the United States will encourage other nations to ignore them. So, after all, even in Roth’s world, reciprocity considerations do influence policy. But Roth insists that we must discourage others from thinking about reciprocity. We can do this, he says, by committing the United States to follow Geneva standards at all times and all places whether or not these standards are actually honored by those we are fighting. The logic here is not easy to follow—unless one thinks the point is to offer an example of self-sacrifice to inspire others that they will forget about their own incentives for compliance and commit them-

selves to the same unwavering faith that Ken-neth Roth happens to hold. I do not believe this is a plausible model of international relations.

Roth sets himself against “those in the Bush Administration who seek to escape the constraints of international law regardless of the cost.” I don’t believe there is anyone in the Bush Administration who thinks it is worth paying unlimited cost to “escape the constraints of international law.” The question has always been how to make compliance with international law a cost-effective (or at least, an affordable) proposition. If we interpret treaties in ways that bear no relation to American interests (as Roth demands), what would induce our compliance except for commitment to some transcendent globalist faith? As I say, I don’t regard this spiritual vision as a plausible model for international relations. It seems especially inappropriate when dealing with religious fanatics who feel even more aggrieved toward our country than Roth does—but do not at all share his vision of salvation through the Evangelical Church of Human Rights.

That’s Entertainment?:

Michael Medved’s article on the state of Hollywood (“That’s Entertainment?,” Summer 2002) underscored the imprecise and backfiring nature of the American domi-

nance in “soft” power. However, I believe that compared to some of its foreign contemporaries, Hollywood still produces a better product. Network television in Latin America and western Europe take far more risks than even the shows that exist on the edge of the envelope in the United States. Medved writes of American culture’s “violence, cruelty, injustice, corruption, arrogance and degeneracy.” How, then, would he view the more eccentric forms of Japanese animation, or the craven state-sponsored demagoguery emanating from our “moderate” Arab counterparts?

A more convincing argument is that the pop culture argument employed by foreign critics is a crutch to mask their own domestic ills. Given the choice between living up to their own economic, political and military failures and blaming heathen America, would not a despot in Havana or Damascus opt for the latter? Granted, *American Beauty* was a disappointing film on many levels, but it was produced in a free market, free expression atmosphere. No one was obligated to view the film, nor did a leviathan nanny state break down the doors of people who did.

Taking Medved’s critiques to their logical end, it seems to me that the only way to get an “ideal” American culture is to legislate it. American pop culture is an imperfect creation, but it is an

authentic one. The spontaneous success of a classic like *Casablanca* was not predicted—but the film matured from the studio system’s boilerplate to an immortal classic. Additionally, there are nuggets of redemption in even the most unlikely venues: consider the spiritual resonance and themes of redemption in the recent season finale of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, which up to then had indulged in wanton sex and destruction.

Ultimately, a contrived representation of America will always fall flat. The power is not only in the producers, but the story as well. For every *Freddy Got Fingered*, there is a *Bridge on the River Kwai*.

LORENZO R. CORTES
Alexandria, VA

Michael Medved’s upset about the nasty side of the film business is well justified. My own Third World experience backs up a lot of what he says, though I think he might have stressed the element of resentment a little more. I have found this to be far and away the most powerful element in the anti-American animus. The immorality of America, *pace* his Polish priest and the mullahs, has never figured very heavily in the anti-Yankee bitterness that I have come across and discussed. The freedom to *be* immoral in that way is most resented, as is the wealth which seems to abound even in criminal circles—maybe

especially in criminal circles.

The film business, whose bottom line is and always has been money—with significance and cultural kudos a distant second—is made up of people whose role is essentially parallel to that of the medieval licensed fools, with the stress on “licensed.” They know that our free society allows them to use pretty much anything they like, across the whole spectrum from porn to high-minded epics, to entertain (or *épater*) an unpredictable and notoriously fickle paying audience. Opportunistic sore-scratching, like any other fashion, has proved profitable enough, and the profit has helped to build a risible sense of self-importance among our licensed fools.

But I doubt that their influence is very great, in any serious sense, in creating a distorted image of what America really is. Our image as a free country is still very strong, and so is the image of our ideal *novus ordo seclorum* that foreigners have favored, from the days of Crèvecoeur until now. Liberal disillusionment at America’s failure to live up to that image of perfection has a strong tradition in the United States itself, and is very powerful in Europe. From such disappointment to the rabid (and rather stupid and stereotyped) Hollywood sore-scratching and anti-Yankee animus abroad is not a great leap. This disillusionment, this discovery that Americans are human and

fallible, filtered through the vaporings of intellectuals in France and Germany above all (and other self-righteous European elites), has had at least as strong an effect on the Third World as the catchpeny images which tumble out of Hollywood. Even the Maghrebi tribes, I found, were perfectly aware of the difference between reality and the cinematic image, as were the Muslim city-dwellers. As often as not the images reinforce, but do not really create, a prejudice that is already there.

HERB GREER
Salisbury, England

Medved replies:

Herb Greer doubts the influence of popular entertainment “in creating a distorted image of what America really is”, thereby ignoring the fact that even American kids spend more time watching television than in classrooms, while foreign children invest far more hours consuming American entertainment than in formal education about the United States. What alternative source of information corrects the messages of our world-conquering pop culture? Unless people in Brazil or Nigeria are vastly more sophisticated and literate than Americans (a dubious proposition), then they get most of their information about the world from mass media, and degrading media images of America inescapably impact their consciousness.

Lorenzo R. Cortes, in

suggesting that American pop culture represents an “authentic” reflection of our civilization, ignores the unrepresentative, biased nature of media messages. Religious commitment, functional families, constructive businessmen—none of these American realities appears regularly in televised or movie picture entertainment. His assertion that “for every *Freddy Got Fingered*, there is a *Bridge on the River Kwai*” contradicts the experience of any working critic, who knows that current ratios of toxic trash to cinematic masterpieces hardly approach one-to-one. *River Kwai* was released 46 years ago, while *Freddy*, alas, escaped from Hollyweird in 2001.

Steppes to Empire:

In his article “Steppes to Empire” (Summer 2002), Andrew Bacevich misrepresents my argument, claiming that I advocate the integration of the newly independent states into Western institutional structures and practices, and that this means making the Central Asian states liberal democracies protected by professional armed forces. Unfortunately, as the article makes clear, I was writing about the Clinton Administration’s policies and said so on the very page he quotes. While I do believe we need to undertake a thorough military-political engagement with Central Asia after September 11, I also know

that reforming those states is the work of generations. But a careful reader would not make the mistake of ascribing to the author views that he clearly states were those of the Clinton Administration. Nor should an author be held accountable for the agenda of his readers or be misquoted by one of those readers in order to advance that agenda.

STEPHEN BLANK
Strategic Studies Institute
U.S. Army War College

The Ground and Nature of Human Rights—Extra Innings:

Herewith an invited last reply to Robin Fox and Francis Fukuyama in our conversation about the origin of human rights (most recently, “The Ground and Nature of Human Rights: Another Round”, Summer 2002).

Of course Fox is correct that “a Chinese communist bureaucrat, a Pashtun mullah in the Northwest Frontier Province, a Wahhabi in Saudi Arabia, a Brahmin in the Punjab, an East African or a Nigerian village chief” will demur from the conceptions of human rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). And their counterparts in history, both ancient and contemporary, would similarly have seen nothing wrong with raping and pillaging, boiling their adversaries in hot oil, enslaving whole populations and

condemning millions of people to concentration camps. But human values have somehow evolved to the point that all those practices are today subject to widespread opprobrium, and not just from governments. Fox seems eager to ignore the fact that, according to a February 2002 Gallup poll, the vast majority of citizens in predominantly Muslim countries label the September 11 attacks "morally unjustifiable."

How do values evolve? Through force sometimes, yes. (Nothing in the human rights regimen automatically precludes the use of force.) Or economic pressure. But also through voluntary adoption. Fox is just wrong to assert that UDHR-inspired values are ones that non-Western "people do not know about, their preachers do not preach and their jurists and scholars do not accept." He has somehow missed the whole human rights revolution in which virtually no country today lacks an indigenous human rights community. Has he also forgotten already the demise of communism in Eastern Europe or of apartheid in South Africa were brought about by *both* persistent external pressure *and* vibrant grass roots movements for human rights inside these countries? Thank God Ronald Reagan gave far less credence than Fox would have us do now to those "communist bureaucrats" who assured the President that human rights val-

ues were destined for the proverbial trashcan of history.

To imagine that the war on terrorism can be successful if it is focused solely on "survival", and not also on the promotion and practice of widely admired American values such as respect for the rule of law, is folly—as President Bush himself has made clear. If Fox is right that Islamic terrorists enjoy "widespread sympathy and support" among Muslims, he has stumbled on a sure-fire way to maximize that support—by disparaging the struggle for human rights and tendering the notion that American military might alone can prevent the triumph of extremism.

My difference with Francis Fukuyama turns on a smaller but still important point. Fukuyama insists that the spread of human rights values can only be accounted for by either cultural imperialism, mass psychosis or the choice he opts for: their appeal to a "commonly shared human essence which . . . responds similarly to certain opportunities and injustices." I have three problems with his contention.

First, Fukuyama never tells us what this "commonly shared human essence" is—at least not in enough detail to help us understand how it grounds diverse yet generally agreed upon rights. This is because, I suspect, the moment that he or anyone else tried to articulate such an essence, we would discover either that it

was not "commonly shared" (i. e., universal), or that it would be so intellectually gelatinous as to be worthless for the purposes of establishing human rights.

Second, even if we concede that some common human essence does underlie our human rights values, those human needs most "essential" to human survival are the needs for food, shelter and health. And yet the rights derivable from these needs (so-called social and economic rights) are the rights *least* widely agreed upon, certainly in the West. If human rights are grounded in our human essence, why are social and economic rights not the pre-eminent ones recognized by governments, to say nothing of scholars like himself, around the world?

Finally, I still see no reason why the answer to the question as to why human rights values have spread cannot be simply, "Because they work best." Pragmatism is a perfectly respectable *philosophical* position, as Fukuyama well knows, which traces its contemporary roots not to Nietzsche or Heidegger but to Charles Sanders Peirce and William James. It requires only that we make the functional assumption, for example, that the vast majority of human communities seek some sort of stability, and communities have concluded from experience that the best way to guarantee stability *in the long run* is to avoid the

gratuitous infliction of pain, recognize minority rights, regulate property fairly, and so on. If Fukuyama wishes to label the quest for social stability our “commonly shared human essence”, he is welcome to it, but one suspects he has something far more grandiose than that in mind.

In the long run, it doesn't matter what grounds for human rights we choose—only that we act upon our beliefs. That is why I have less trouble with Fukuyama's position than Fox's. Indeed, in many ways I wish Fukuyama were right about natural law; it would make my job easier. This much, anyway, is clear: human rights are here to stay, and their pursuit is inextricably bound up with national interests and the dynamics of international politics. To believe, as Fox does, that we can neatly sever them from our quest for survival is thus naïve and dangerous.

WILLIAM F. SCHULZ
Executive Director
Amnesty International, USA

Popper's Return Engagement:

It is reassuring to find one's anthropological understanding of Popper—his view of the “transition to the open society”, the Freudian connection, and especially the role of “the strain of civilization” in explaining our current discontents—confirmed by such a distinguished thinker as Neil McInnes (“Popper's Return

Engagement”, Spring 2002). When I first discussed these matters in the Autumn 1996 *Salisbury Review* (and then later in a chapter on Popper in *The Culture Cult*) I never imagined they would be so eloquently endorsed in the pages of *The National Interest*.

One matter, however, requires comment. What I put forward speculatively in *The Culture Cult* as a source of intellectual conflict between Popper and “an anthropologist named Ivan Sutherland” in New Zealand cannot be rhetorically simplified in the way McInnes does—however well it may read. To say that “the contest of the closed and the open society was not for Popper, as it was for most of his readers, a bookish matter, but an issue of flesh and blood, a painful daily struggle of intellect against unreason” is not so clear cut. It would be nice if it were true, but when I put this same proposition to the late Colin Simkin, an economist who was the author of *Popper's Views on National and Social Science* and a close friend of Popper from his New Zealand days (and who knew both Popper and Sutherland in 1939), it was strongly resisted. He felt that personality clash alone was sufficient to explain their feud. I still think it highly plausible that deep intellectual differences about the value of tribal and civilized societies separated the philosopher, on the one hand, and the anthropologist, on the other, and

that this added to their mutual antagonism; but it cannot be more than informed speculation.

ROGER SANDALL
Bondi Beach, Australia

Poor Kyrgyzstan:

In his article “Poor Kyrgyzstan” (Summer 2002), Richard Slaughter skillfully produces a detailed and colorful picture of current economic conditions in Kyrgyzstan. He does this on the basis of a recent visit to my country's impoverished south, where he was engaged on an important project. My country owes a debt of thanks to many foreign economists, like Slaughter, who have visited us and made an earnest effort to grapple with our problems; they are making important contributions to our effort to work our way out of the economic morass that came with the end of the Soviet Union. However, Slaughter's description of the reform process in my country and his prescriptions for future reform are mistaken in some important respects.

Slaughter believes that the economic reforms that have been undertaken are having little or no positive impact in the country. All countries which have undergone the rocky road of transition from a command system (largely driven by policymakers beyond our borders) to a market system have experienced initial disruptions character-

ized by a precipitous decline in productivity and severe challenges to the social safety net. Kyrgyzstan has not been an exception to this rule. But Kyrgyzstan's fast-track economic reforms have produced palpable results even in the short term, and the long-term prospects for economic recovery in the country are solid.

In analyzing numerous problems in Kyrgyzstan, Slaughter draws upon anecdotal evidence of corruption, particularly in the country's rural southern region. The government of Kyrgyzstan has repeatedly acknowledged that corruption is an entrenched problem and many government programs have attempted to grapple with it. Slaughter's comments on this subject are useful in some regards, but his descriptions of the role of government in the process are unjustifiably cynical.

Finally, Slaughter should keep in mind that corruption is not the exclusive preserve of developing countries. Observations like Slaughter's are best taken in comparison with other countries, and particularly with the other nations in transition. Kyrgyzstan's record in this group is respectable. Notably, Kyrgyzstan belongs to the group that openly acknowledges the magnitude of the current problem and is prepared to engage it. Does this not merit some recognition?

BAKTYBEK ABDRISSAEV
Ambassador
The Kyrgyz Republic

Slaughter replies:

I thank the Ambassador for his considered response to my article, and stress that I share his concerns. The Kyrgyz Republic is a very special country whose government is moving it forward to the best of its ability. For purposes of my article, Kyrgyzstan is a case study, a detailed example of the general question of how a pluralistic, democratic, market-oriented society might be developed. While the article is on Kyrgyzstan, my intended focus is the general problem of institutions that promote rent-seeking rather than productive economic activity, and the role of the international aid community in that outcome.

Corruption is a special topic because of the rhetoric and common usages associated with the term. Corruption—individuals seeking to personally benefit from positions of responsibility—is endemic in the human condition. From that perspective it is a moral question. The extent to which it interferes with the functioning and growth of a society is an institutional one. My concern is not with whether it exists, for it exists, as the Ambassador properly points out, everywhere. The concern is with how a developing country's institutions inhibit or promote self-seeking, and the ways the international aid community adds to the problem.

The article speaks of "functional corruption", not

as an indictment of Kyrgyz government or society, but as a generic problem of development when individuals who provide specialized services—teachers, physicians—or exercise social sanction—police, building inspectors, tax collectors, anyone authorized to sign a permit of any kind—both believe that they must supplement their (very meager) incomes with under-the-table payments and also possess jurisdiction over a required governmental function. This problem is minimized (but not eliminated) in Western countries through a combination of transparency, legal sanction and competitive salaries. As revelations over the last year make clear, these institutional constraints are less than perfect in any society.

That said, to manage the corruption problem—and, not coincidentally, to encourage economic growth—it is necessary to first create a productive environment in which individuals can legally earn incomes commensurate with their talents. Creating such an economy is inhibited by high tax rates and arbitrary tax enforcement, both of which are present, and are encouraged—even insisted on, in the case of tax rates—by international agencies. Kyrgyzstan is not alone in this situation. Finally, several of the recommendations in my full report to the Asian Development Bank (specifically, tax reform) have been the subject of legislative ini-

tatives in Bishkek, though I would not draw a causal link between my report and the reform proposals. It is my understanding that the IMF has blocked several of the measures, including a reduction of the income tax to 10 percent, and reduction of the VAT and pension tax rates.

This is a prodigious task, especially in a society where few of the required institutions existed prior to 1991—not at any time in the region's history. The Kyrgyz are to be commended for their attention to the task, and for their rapid progress on many fronts. They have also benefited from much of the international assistance provided over the past ten years, but are in jeopardy of becoming dependant on that aid instead of growing away from it. Significant progress will require both serious local reform and reform of the international aid agencies.

America the Despised:

Takis Michas' "America the Despised" (Spring 2002) attempts to present a rising anti-American tide in contemporary Greece. However, before the readers of this esteemed journal reach any final verdict, some additional arguments should be taken into consideration.

First of all, relations between the people of Greece and the people of the United States can only be described as excellent. The prominent

position and considerable influence of the thriving Greek-American community attests to this assertion. Americans visiting Greece are invariably treated with friendliness, respect and even admiration. Absolutely no evidence exists, and no case has ever been documented, concerning the ill treatment of Americans purely as a result of their nationality (a much better test of anti-Americanism than certain polls attempting to measure reactions to occasional policies of U.S. administrations). In fact, American culture is highly popular, if not dominant, in Greece and it manifests itself in a variety of ways in every day life, including music, food, movies, clothes, etc.

Secondly, vocal protests have been related to specific and controversial decisions made by various U.S. administrations. These included the support by the Johnson and Nixon Administrations of the Greek Colonels' junta in the 1967–74 period, which culminated with the junta's criminal coup against Archbishop Makarios and the Turkish invasion of Cyprus that followed. More recently, Greek public opinion has been highly critical of the U.S. decision to press for the initiation of NATO's bombing campaign in Kosovo.

However, for the majority of people and politicians, honest and public disagreements concerning foreign policy decisions do not amount to

anti-Americanism. They do not neutralize the friendly relations among the people of the two countries, and decades of official bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation.

Michas is absolutely on target, though, when he emphasizes "the ideological rapprochement" between the far Left and certain elements of the far, neo-Orthodox Right. This is a truly remarkable development that is fundamentally anti-modern and anti-globalization in nature, and hence *only incidentally* anti-American (the United States being the state best exemplifying these trends).

Crucially, though, both far Left and far Right are minority movements fighting a rearguard and futile battle (not unlike the Luddites who were quixotically battling industrialization). Michas brilliantly exposes them, but overemphasizes their current importance and policy influence in contemporary Greece. In this respect, he ignores a more "enlightened" and rational competing tradition in Greek society, with firmer roots in "Athens", that finds its modern intellectual antecedents in Adamantios Koraes (perhaps the greatest Greek thinker of the past centuries). It views Greece as fundamentally European (some 85 percent of Greeks adopt a Europhile stance), aims for the country's modernization, and welcomes the challenges of globalization—rather than attempting to deny or demonize their impact.

This tradition has given birth to a movement whose ranks include the majority of citizens, almost all mainstream politicians and most leading intellectuals. The result has been a foreign policy that (as regards southeastern Europe and despite past mistakes—documented in Michas' major new book *Unholy Alliance*—but still not amounting to anti-Americanism) favors the territorial integrity of all regional states. The Greek mainstream (political and intellectual) has promoted active participation in both KFOR and SFOR and other types of peace-keeping operations (most recently in Afghanistan); and it supports human rights, regional democratic reform, economic growth and, as soon as feasible, the incorporation of the Balkans into Euro-Atlantic structures.

In the final analysis, Michas presents a distorted picture of Greece as a country suspended somewhere between the Middle Ages and the post-9/11 international landscape. He forgets that in many advanced democracies (including the United States) a continuing tension is found between mainstream (secular) and fundamentalist thought. What is important is not the existence of such a debate (with different parameters and

issues for each country), but which outlook ultimately achieves the dominant position. Greece's people and leadership have primarily opted for the tradition associated with actions and values that have made Greece a democratically stable and prosperous state in the European Union, the only state in the Balkans that is member of both NATO and the EU. Greek society will continue to traverse this path, despite vocal, reactionary, anti-Western elements that are destined to play, at best, a marginal role.

ARISTOTLE TZIAMPIRIS
University of Piraeus
Athens, Greece

Michas replies:

I was under the impression that in the Humean tradition arguments are settled with reference to facts and figures. My article provided both—polling data and actual statements from leading social figures. Tzampiris claims that I presented a “distorted picture of Greece.” Yet nowhere in his letter does he present the results of even a single poll showing that Greeks are favorably disposed towards the United States! Incidentally, since the publication of my article in *The National Interest*, a 600-page book has been published (alas, only in Greek) entitled, *They Deserved It:*

Greek Responses to the 9/11 Attack. It presents an exhaustive and detailed analysis of the reactions among the mainstream media and leading public intellectuals to 9/11. After reading the book, I came to the conclusion that I had indeed distorted slightly the picture of Greece. It seems the picture I painted in my article was far too rosy. Finally let me stress that my book, *Unholy Alliance: Greece and Milosevic's Serbia*, is not about Greece's “mistakes.” It is about Greek complicity in the war crimes in Bosnia, which to this very day is being covered up by the political class of the country.

Russia's Higher Police:

Just a brief comment to the fascinating article by Laurent Murawiec and Clifford G. Gaddy (“Russia's Higher Police”, Spring 2002). It is known that the former Soviet secret police still exists in Belarus, and likely plays an important role there. Now the obvious question: How independent is it of the Kremlin's ruling elite? In view of the fact that Belarus is one of the main suppliers of weapons for the “rogue” states, this question might turn out to be quite delicate. □

JACEK WIERZCHOWSKI
Warsaw, Poland

Dual Frustration

America, Russia and the Persian Gulf

Stephen Sestanovich

IRAN AND IRAQ loom larger than ever in Russian-American relations. At a time when the number of issues on which Moscow and Washington disagree is dwindling, these two are still contentious enough—despite Russia’s “yes” vote in the UN Security Council on November 8—that officials and commentators on each side regularly suspect the other of ill will and bad faith.

It’s not a new problem. Long before President Bush found Iraq and Iran to be part of an “axis of evil”, they were already the subject of acrimonious exchanges between Moscow and Washington. American policymakers have frequently asked their Russian counterparts how they can expect to maintain friendly relations with the United States and with states that support terrorism, threaten American friends, and violate their own international commitments by seeking weapons of mass destruction.

Worse, Americans accuse Russia of *helping* Iraq and Iran. When Russian diplomats shielded Iraq from international pres-

sure in the late 1990s, Madeleine Albright used to call them “Saddam’s lawyers.” And the U.S. government continues to believe that Iran’s effort to build nuclear weapons and long-range missiles gets a boost from Russian technology and expertise. This is no minor irritation: the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by regimes deeply hostile to our interests has become America’s pre-eminent national security concern, and Russian policies that make it harder for the United States to address this concern are not easy to ignore.

The extraordinary near-alliance forged by President Bush and President Putin after September 11, 2001, ought to help the two sides to work together on these issues. But the legacy they must overcome is daunting. The United States, under Democratic and Republican administrations alike, has raised Iran and Iraq with the Russians over many years, when relations were good and when they were shaky. It has treated them as matters of the highest priority and as everyday diplomatic nuisances. It has sometimes offered to pay a high price for resolving them, at other times no price at all. Russia’s response to all this has changed little over time. It has usually resisted putting pressure on either country, and only rarely restricted its relations with them. While expressing hope that neither will acquire nuclear weapons, it has usually betrayed a kind of fatalism about the outcome.

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As we face the prospect of another Persian Gulf war, a closer look at the past is in order, if only to understand why years of American effort have not gotten us the results we sought. Renewed confrontation with Iraq may actually create an opportunity for Russia and the United States to put this disagreement behind them for good. (Washington has already offered Moscow more substantial inducements to cooperate than ever before.) Success may open up a chance for a breakthrough on Iran, as well. But none of this will come to pass if the United States does not give the Russians a better sense of what its tolerances are and how our relations are likely to develop if we cannot cooperate. Otherwise, the Bush-Putin partnership could become an inadvertent casualty of war.

Iraq, the Last Time Around

SINCE THE Persian Gulf War, Russia and the United States have played out their disagreements over Iraq largely within the UN Security Council. Here the war of 1991 gained an international mandate, peace terms were laid down, and disputes about enforcing them took shape.

These disputes were at their peak between 1997 and 1999, when Saddam Hussein challenged the UN inspection system created at the end of the war to deny Iraq weapons of mass destruction. After two years of confrontation, inspectors of the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) were ousted from Iraq, and UNSCOM itself was forced to disband. Its much weaker successor, UNMOVIC (United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission), was not even able to enter Iraq.¹

The Iraqis would not have been able to overthrow the UN disarmament regime but for divisions among the permanent members of the Security Council. From 1997 on, whenever Iraq sought to dilute

UNSCOM's authority, replace its leadership, change the composition of its staff or restrict its activities inside Iraq, it enjoyed consistent Russian support. Moscow insisted that Iraq had gone far to meet UN disarmament requirements and deserved to know that intrusive inspections would soon give way to less onerous "monitoring" and eventually to a full lifting of economic sanctions.

Two motives appeared to guide Russian policy. The first was political—to constrain U.S. actions, preserve Russian authority, keep the Iraq question in the Security Council and maximize U.S. isolation if Washington acted unilaterally. The second motive was economic—to reap the material benefits of being Iraq's chief protector against American pressure.

Russian success was significant, but incomplete. The confrontation between Iraq and UNSCOM was punctuated in December 1998 by four days of British and American bombing, which Moscow could neither prevent nor counter. Nor did Russian support free Baghdad from the UN sanctions regime and indirect regulation of the Iraqi economy. Yet even this halfway result brought Moscow substantial benefits. The United States and Britain punished Saddam, but they did not take Iraq off the Security Council agenda. Indeed, once the bombing stopped, their diplomats went back to negotiating UNMOVIC's mandate. Russia's veto continued to give it influence with both sides. On the economic front, Russia profited handsomely from the continuing standoff. The oil-for-food program, created in 1996 to help the Iraqi people, perpetuated UN

¹For an account by UNSCOM's second chairman, see Richard Butler, *The Greatest Threat: Iraq, Weapons of Mass Destruction and the Growing Crisis of Global Security* (New York: PublicAffairs Press, 2000). Kenneth Pollack's *The Threatening Storm* (New York: Random House, 2002) provides an inside view of U.S. policy.

oversight of Iraqi trade; but because it allowed Iraq to choose its partners, it was an effective tool with which to reward Russia for its support. Between 1997 and 2000 Russian-Iraqi trade quintupled.

Saddam offered Russia even larger pay-offs down the road. At the beginning of its campaign against UNSCOM, Iraq signed a major exploration and development contract (valued at around \$12 billion) with the Russian oil company LUKoil. Unlike increased trade, of course, these benefits could only be realized if sanctions were lifted; the same was true of Russia's desire to collect its \$7–8 billion in Iraqi state debts. Both gave Moscow further reasons to keep pressing for an end to sanctions.

In the late 1990s, accumulating Russian-American disagreements stoked a conviction on both sides that meaningful cooperation, not to mention real partnership, could not last. As one of the most important issues on which the two sides disagreed, Iraq was part of this downward trend. Yet what is striking about the evolution of Russian-American relations in this period is how limited the impact of Iraq turned out to be. American officials wanted to keep discord over Iraq from having negative side effects; they called this “managing our differences”, and considered it a mark of maturity in Russian-American relations. Russia, too, clearly wanted to avoid paying a price in American enmity for the support it gave Saddam.

Domestic politics provides part of the explanation for Iraq's marginal impact on relations between Russia and the United States. Both presidents were politically vulnerable and had more pressing matters on their minds (Clinton, impeachment; Yeltsin, the political turmoil that followed Russia's financial crash). Other international issues, like the Balkans, evoked a much stronger domestic response. Iraq, by contrast, was an issue for foreign ministries.

Yet the main reason that Iraq did not cut deeply into Russian-American relations was that American aims were so limited. The Clinton Administration treated confrontation with Saddam as a test of core international principles—non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, respect for multilateral obligations, great power solidarity against rogue states and terrorists—but it was not willing to push matters to a decisive conclusion. American use of force did not aim to make Saddam comply, only to make his actions costly. No one thought a brief show of force would change Iraqi behavior, get inspectors back in, alter Russian policy, or, least of all, dislodge the Ba'ath regime. President Clinton had just signed a bill making Iraqi “regime change” the goal of U.S. policy, but airpower alone was clearly not going to achieve it, least of all in four days. When this episode was over, the administration paid little further attention to Iraq.

Because America's ends were limited, so were its means. During this period no U.S. official ever offered a serious *quid pro quo* for Russian support; or warned of the consequences of not cooperating. Measured against the priority that Iraq has now acquired, these omissions may seem strange, but as part of a strategy that did not aspire to solve the problem, they were not strange at all. The most obvious economic inducements that Russia sought were those associated with an end to sanctions. But because it was unwilling to do what was needed to disarm Saddam or overthrow the Ba'ath regime, the United States came to rely more heavily on keeping sanctions in place. They were what remained of a tough U.S. policy.

As for warning Russia of the negative consequences of backing Iraq, this was hard to make credible. Russian-American relations were already troubled, and the Clinton Administration wanted to salvage what was left, not subject the relationship to still greater stress. More important,

pressure tactics against Russia would have been inconsistent with American strategy toward Iraq itself. Washington itself was not trying for a knock-out punch against Saddam Hussein, and there was thus no sense in telling the Russians that they were to blame when we ourselves fell short.

Iran: The "Bill and Boris" Formula

IRAN AND IRAQ—two Persian Gulf states seeking weapons of mass destruction—posed similar problems for Russian-American relations in the 1990s, but Washington's strategy for dealing with Russia on Iran was completely different from its strategy on Iraq, and left a deeper imprint on Russian-American relations.²

The first difference involved the scale of the problem, and its priority. American officials, who sometimes felt personally deceived by their Russian counterparts, claimed that Russia was helping Iran acquire long-range ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons. As a result, Russia's relationship with Iran was much more than a divisive diplomatic issue for the United States. It became a source of uneasy second thoughts about Russia's post-communist evolution, and about the overall wisdom of U.S. policy. (Assistance to Iran put Russia in very disreputable company. Its policy toward Iraq, after all, was similar to France's; its policy toward Iran was similar to North Korea's. This was no small difference.)

Because stopping Russian assistance to Iran was a higher priority than Iraq, it required a different kind of communication. Harsh words between foreign ministers would not be enough. The U.S. message on Iran aimed both higher—at an explicit "Bill-and-Boris" commitment to fix things—and wider, since so many institutions of the Russian state (and actors outside it) were working with Tehran's weapons programs. A solution

had to start at the top, but could not succeed without the cooperation of officials at lower levels, too.

Such an effort called for deploying serious leverage, and the result was a third difference between the U.S. handling of Iran and Iraq. The Clinton Administration offered large economic inducements to reorient Russian high-tech industry—whether the huge Ministry of Atomic Energy or individual missile specialists—away from business with Iran toward more wholesome ventures with the West. American officials conjured images of vast cooperation, but when carrots alone did not work—and when Congress threatened to act on its own—the administration made use of sticks as well. Sanctions were imposed in mid-1998 and again in early 1999 on Russian entities that had helped the Iranian nuclear and missile programs, and were repeatedly threatened thereafter.

To stop Russian assistance to Iran, American policy sought the extra torque it lacked over Iraq. No other issue was said to threaten the Russian-American relationship so fundamentally, was tied so closely to mutual confidence between presidents, was so incessantly discussed by officials at all levels, or was linked to such large material inducements. It would be hard to draw up a cleaner textbook case in which outwardly similar and highly important issues were handled so differently.

Why, then, was the result so similar? Russian export-control laws and regulations were tightened, and some glaring cases of freelance cooperation appeared to end (especially when the U.S. government provided specific information about them). Yet no moonlighting Russian mis-

²For inside accounts, see Strobe Talbott, *The Russia Hand: A Memoir of Presidential Diplomacy* (New York: Random House, 2002); and Robert Einhorn and Gary Samore, "Ending Russian Assistance to Iran's Nuclear Bomb", *Survival* (Summer 2002).

sile engineers were arrested, no Iranian middlemen were expelled for misusing their diplomatic status, and the largest item of Russian-Iranian cooperation—a nuclear power reactor being built at Bushehr—continued to provide effective cover for illicit assistance. By the end of the decade, the U.S. intelligence community judged that Iran continued to benefit from Russian help.

In the effort to stop Russian assistance to Iran, each tool of U.S. pressure proved blunter than it should have been. The very claim that Iranian nuclear weapons proliferation was a matter of high priority was doubted by Russian officials, who seemed to view American warnings about assistance to Iran as essentially a way of fending off partisan domestic attacks on the Clinton Administration. The Russians retorted that it was not their job to save the president from his critics. Similarly, they read American forecasts of deep damage to Russian-American relations as an invitation to engage in a joint effort to manipulate Congressional opinion. They always wanted to know what minimum set of actions would defuse pressure for awhile, not how to solve the problem for good. These perceptions were wrong, but they were not altogether unreasonable.

The administration's use of inducements was also problematic. The Russians needed to be convinced that their performance alone would determine whether they got the carrots they wanted. They saw instead that corporate lobbying successfully blocked the use of sanctions whenever it was likely to hurt American business. The administration's own message about the link between performance and payoff was inconsistent. Thus, Vice President Gore's stiff warning to Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov in November 1998 ("You can have a piddling trickle of money from Iran or a bonanza with us, but you can't have both."³) coincided with a proposal for major new assistance to

Russia under the Nunn-Lugar program.

Finally, the assumption that a presidential handshake could stop Russian assistance to Iran proved mistaken and out of date. By the late 1990s, Boris Yeltsin lacked the interest, energy, aptitude and maybe even the power to meet such a complex political and institutional challenge. And American appeals to him, and to the grand goal of Russian-American partnership, no longer had their old motivating force. Russian assistance to Iran seriously eroded mutual confidence, but so did financial meltdown and scandal, Kosovo, NATO expansion, national missile defense and other first-order disagreements. The circuitry of relations between Moscow and Washington had reached overload. They did not become manageable again until each country's transition to new leadership was complete.

Bush, Putin and Saddam

SINCE PRESIDENT Bush's "axis of evil" speech, the United States and Iraq have again been on a collision course. But Washington has no longer to take all-out Russian opposition for granted, a strategic transformation made possible by a series of changes in Russian politics and foreign policy.

The first of these changes, of course, is the strong rapprochement between Russia and the United States and the unprecedented, unequivocal endorsement of U.S. military action that came with it. That President Putin would also distance Russia from Iraq was made possible by a second change—his complete authority over Russian foreign policy, based on his extraordinary personal popularity and reputation for a bristly attentiveness to Russian national interests. Yeltsin believed that denouncing every American military action made him look tough; Putin sees

³Talbott, *The Russia Hand*, p. 295.

that ineffectual public tantrums would make him look weak.

Similarly, when Putin says Russian diplomacy must serve economic interests, no one accuses him of putting foreign policy up for sale. He enables low motives to win respect as high principle. When American pressure on Iraq resumed, Russian spokesmen started issuing public reminders of Russia's economic stake in the matter. Iraq had never before been bargained over like this, but U.S. officials got the hint. Russia, they promised, would be rewarded for support.

The broader evolution of Russia's economic elite has also pushed policy toward accommodation with the United States. Riding a four-year surge in oil production, leading Russian business figures now say that their prime goal is to gain access to Western markets; they profess to be tired of being bottom-feeders dependent on semi-illicit ties with the world's rogues. For businessmen with such an outlook, Putin's alignment with Bush did not sacrifice the Russian corporate bottom line—it strengthened it.

Together these changes ruled out the reflexive pro-Saddam stance Russia had adopted in the past. Saddam might face defeat, but Putin would not let it become his defeat as well. Some commentators even wrote of the risks for Russia in standing by Iraq too long. Russia, they said, might find itself empty-handed and isolated when the war was over: What kind of hard-boiled defense of the national interest would *that* be?

As such talk showed, the hardening of U.S. policy against Iraq had narrowed the benefits that Baghdad could offer Moscow. Yes, by taking advantage of a crisis it might be possible to push Russian-Iraqi trade a little higher, but the larger economic interests that Russian officials have been invoking—the repayment of Iraqi debt to Russia and the long-term development of Iraq's energy potential—can best be advanced by

working with Washington, not with Ba'athi Baghdad. (In fact, Saddam cannot bestow these benefits even if war is averted, since they depend on the lifting of sanctions, to which the U.S. administration will clearly not agree.)

Much of Russia's recent handling of Iraq has seemed to follow from such calculations. Putin has avoided personal identification with Iraq, declined to meet with Saddam's longtime deputy, Tariq Aziz, and authorized official contact with Iraqi opposition figures. At the end of last summer, when Iraqi diplomats began touting a draft ten-year economic agreement, Russian officials quietly declined to sign. Meanwhile, Russian oil companies talked up cooperation with the United States. From LUKoil's CEO, Vagit Alekperov, came the (probably false) claim that the United States had promised to honor the contract he had signed with Iraq in 1997; his rival at Yukos, Mikhail Khodorkovsky, urged the Russian government to get assurances that Washington would prevent too big a drop in postwar oil prices. Putin actually joked that he was not trying to squeeze more out of the West in some sort of "Oriental bazaar." No one believed him.

The most telling sign that Russia does not want to go down with Saddam was, of course, its vote for UN Security Council Resolution 1441, warning Iraq of "serious consequences" if it did not meet its disarmament obligations. After two months of diplomatic stalling, and of seeming to want above all to stay America's hand, Russia positioned itself to blame Saddam if war broke out. Between 1997 and 1999 Russia's abstentions and endless haggling in the Security Council had clearly encouraged Baghdad to flout its obligations, knowing that Moscow would continue to front for it no matter what. Joining a unanimous Security Council vote in November 2002 sent a completely different message: You're on your own.

Yet for all the seeming clarity of this message, Russia will face continuing choices as Iraq's confrontation with the United States unfolds. And Moscow will have many motives to try to tie the Bush Administration down. There will be the unavoidably gray areas of UNMOVIC's mandate and findings. There will be those who say that Russia cannot defend its authority in the UN Security Council—a last residue of Soviet great power status—by *supporting* the United States, only by checking it. There will be the example set by France, Germany and other European critics of U.S. policy. There will be the chance to wheedle concessions from Washington on Georgia and Chechnya. Putin may even believe that protracted haggling will further bolster his image as a tough advocate of Russian interests.

Above all, Moscow will keep its options open if it is not sure of the direction and conviction of American policy. The United States, after all, has sought Russian support by offering inducements on which it can make good only if it wins outright. Until it is clear that the United States will prevail, Russia risks more by aligning itself prematurely with the United States than by standing aloof. Were American policy to unravel and Saddam to stay in power, what reward would Russia then claim, and from whom? Putin no more wants to tie himself to an American failure than to an Iraqi one.

In the 1990s, American influence with Russia was limited by the fact that Washington clearly did not intend to go all the way. The same is true today. A U.S. policy that is not determined to solve the problem actually revives Saddam's leverage with Moscow.

Finally, Putin's choices will be affected by how he reads their likely impact on what has been his supreme foreign policy achievement—a partnership with the United States that elevates Russia's international status. Last time around, Russian

policymakers knew that their handling of Iraq would have no material impact on their relations with the United States. Washington had made clear it would not link the two. In the current confrontation, however, no goal of U.S. foreign policy is more important than success against Iraq. For all their improvement, Russian-American relations cannot be insulated from this issue. If, when it's all over, the administration feels that it has been critically held back by Russian policy, it will hardly be able to shrug off the disagreement as it did before. Has President Putin told President Bush he doesn't want Iraq to harm U.S.-Russian relations? If so, it's surely true. But has President Bush told President Putin that they will be just as good friends if this disagreement keeps American policy from succeeding? If so, it's almost surely false.

Iran Today: "Bill and Boris" Again?

BEFORE George W. Bush took office, his supporters and spokesmen insisted that in dealing with Russia on Iran he would show a sharper edge than his predecessor and make Moscow see that cooperation in other areas would depend on solving this critical problem. But it didn't happen, and the main reasons are not hard to discern.

Despite its criticisms of the Clinton record in handling this issue, the new administration wanted most of all to engineer a smooth withdrawal from the ABM treaty, and for this reason, far from featuring a sharp edge, initial meetings between Bush and Putin accentuated the positive. Lest they spoil the tone, other contentious issues would have to wait. After September 11, a still more powerful reason to put Iran to one side arose—and it was not just that the war on terrorism came first. Putin's quick show of support made the entire idea of Russian-American partnership credible again. Senior

American officials assumed that the two countries now had key parallel interests, and that with a bit more time their new ally would do the right thing on Iran.

For his own reasons, Putin did seem to be fashioning a new approach to Iran. He fired Yevgeny Adamov, his minister of atomic energy (seen by U.S. officials as an incorrigible liar about cooperation with Iran), abandoned Moscow's support for Tehran's claim to an equal share of Caspian Sea energy, and proposed a multilateral force that other Caspian states might join for protection against Iran. After Bush's "axis of evil" speech, too, the Iranian foreign minister's visit to Moscow was abruptly cancelled; Putin, it seemed, did not want to see him.

Officials in both countries, then, had reason to think that the ingredients of a solution to this problem might be at hand. Putin faced fewer bureaucratic obstacles to a policy shift and seemed ready to stand up to Tehran; with both Congress and the media ignoring Russian assistance to Iran, Bush was also free to maneuver. Most important, in both Moscow and Washington there was new interest in a formula that would allow each side to claim it had achieved its core objective. Privately, senior U.S. policymakers acknowledged that the Bushehr nuclear power plant was not a prime proliferation danger in itself, but rather that it provided a cover for transfers of really dangerous assistance. If the Russians would stop all sensitive transfers to Iran beyond Bushehr—and stop making excuses for themselves and the Iranians—an agreement might be possible.

For their part, highly placed Russians admitted privately that Iran *was* working on nuclear weapons and long-range missiles, and that this called for strict and tightly enforced limits on future Russian-Iranian cooperation. If, they said, the Americans were prepared to stop trying to roll back *all* Russian nuclear coopera-

tion with Iran, focus on what was truly dangerous, and lubricate an understanding with a major expansion of Russian-American nuclear cooperation, then this long-running dispute would be over.⁴

"They're saying all the right things!"—this was the cheery assessment of American officials before the Bush-Putin summit of May 2002. Yet the meeting and its aftermath were a severe setback. Far from confirming a new approach, Putin embarrassed Bush at their joint press conference by refusing to confirm "assurances" that Bush had just claimed to have heard from him in private, moments before. Instead, Putin launched into a spirited defense of nuclear cooperation with Iran, and charged that *American* companies were guilty of giving Tehran dangerous technologies. U.S. officials bravely insisted that the private discussions had gone better, but Russian officials showed no signs of a new policy. In July, in fact, they announced plans to build as many as five more reactors after current work at Bushehr is completed.

Why did high hopes for a breakthrough come to so little so quickly? Ironically, one part of the answer was the new atmosphere of Russian-American relations. With less public heat on the issue, and no threat of Congressional interference, U.S. officials had hoped that Putin would push for a solution without fear of seeming to yield to U.S. pressure. But the lack of pressure also implied that the United States now cared less about the whole issue. Wittingly or not, the Bush Administration may have come to believe in the very solution that the Clinton Administration did—mutual trust between presidents as a lever to override narrow bureaucratic or economic inter-

⁴For a cogent version of such a proposal, praised by many Russian and American officials, see Einhorn and Samore, "Ending Russian Assistance to Iran's Nuclear Bomb."

ests. Far from thinking they should reciprocate because the administration had become so reasonable, Russian officials may have concluded that Washington was looking to retreat from a failed policy.

Similarly, although the Bush Administration had described a long and impressive list of material inducements intended to elicit a change in Russian policy, it had not persuaded the Russians that getting these benefits depended on changing their own policy. The American effort to pick up the pieces after the summit showed this problem vividly. Perhaps, the President's advisors admitted, Putin had not gotten a clear message in Moscow, but he would definitely hear straight talk at their next gathering, the G-8 summit in Canada. When that meeting rolled around, however, the leaders spent their time discussing a new \$20 billion aid program to improve the security of Russian nuclear materials. They barely touched on Iran. Demands for better behavior were now being downplayed in favor of offers of new assistance, just as the Clinton Administration had done in 1998 when it veered from sanctions to aid increases over just a few months' time.⁵

In seeking a breakthrough in the long dispute over Russian assistance to Iran, the Bush Administration has had many advantages: a strong overall relationship, an effective Russian leader to deal with, and an array of powerful material inducements to offer. The administration has not treated Iran as a make-or-break issue of Russian-American relations, and it will understandably not do so until its confrontation with Iraq is over. At that point, assuming that Putin has avoided putting himself at odds with the United States, there is likely to be a further surge of confidence between Moscow and Washington—and this will create an even better opening for a serious discussion of assistance to Iran. Yet the administration must remember that, for all the advantages

of the U.S. position, it has so far been unable to convince the Russian side to take the problem seriously enough to solve it. Getting it to do so will not be easy. In its dealings with two administrations on Iran, Russia's preference has always been for partial solutions—at best—that only stored up trouble for Russian-American relations in the future. If the administration wants to change that preference, it will have to show that more hangs in the balance than has ever been true in the past.

Russia's Fatalism

OVER THE past decade, most of the issues that were thought to have the potential to sink Russian-American relations for good did not do so. Almost all of them have in fact faded into insignificance. Iran and Iraq, however, are likely to have far greater staying power. Not only do the Persian Gulf and Middle East seem certain to remain first-order preoccupations of American national strategy for years to come, but Moscow and Washington continue to have different approaches to the issue that has lately animated the U.S. government more than any other—the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

The American approach to this problem has become, especially since September 11, increasingly absolutist. The prospect of having hostile states vault the nuclear threshold is viewed as a fundamental threat, to which the right policy response is to make use of all available instruments of pressure—stopping nuclear cooperation with offenders,

⁵Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security John Bolton tried to set the record straight in Congressional testimony in October, saying that poor Russian performance on Iran would block the new aid. But it will take more than one statement to make this linkage credible.

branding them as pariahs, using force *in extremis* to block their progress or to disarm them. The Russian outlook has been more fatalist—less fearful, more resigned, less determined. Proliferation, in this view, is hardly good, but it may be inevitable. If so, the right response is to preserve one's influence with those who acquire such weapons, deter their use and not let oneself become a target.

The United States has never had a better opportunity than it has now to draw Russian policy away from this fatalism. We need to seize it, for the more absolutist our own approach, the more we need others to work with us. Absolutism—trying to solve a problem outright—is not the same thing as, and is not served by, unilateralism.

Given Russia's circumstances, of course, fatalism has something to be said for it, and absolutism may seem like over-reaching. But only at first glance. The record of recent years suggests the high costs—for both the United States and Russia—of pretending that partial solutions are complete ones. It can't be lost on Putin that if Yevgeny Primakov had not let Saddam defy the United Nations four

years ago, Russia would not be in the awkward fix it's in today, trying to decide which way to jump when war comes. From the Russian standpoint, North Korea's recent sensational disclosure that it has defied its 1994 agreement to forswear a nuclear weapons program must be equally unnerving. For Putin knows that Russia is, in a sense, the sponsor of a still looser arrangement with Iran, and that Russian help is already implicated in subverting it. Does he like the prospect of being briefed by George Bush, at some point in the future, that Iran has taken the North Korean path?

To change Russia's fatalistic calculus, the United States has to suggest the results that will follow from such scenarios in the future, and from continued inability to cooperate in the interim. But it must also suggest the possibilities that greater cooperation would open up—not only in slowing or stopping proliferation, but in the consolidation of Russian-American relations. If America's new absolutist goals are at the center of its national security policy, then they need to be at the center of its relations with Moscow as well. □

An American in Tehran

Britain and Russia cooked up ways to end the Iranian constitutional experiment. Britain had come to realize that one king came to heel more easily than eighty parliamentarians with their own opinions and agendas. Into this uncertain environment another American entered the Iranian political scene and left his mark on the Constitutional Revolution: W. Morgan Shuster, a New York banker whom the Iranian Parliament retained to reorder Iran's finances. He proved to be, like the young [Howard] Baskerville, an idealist who believed in the cause of Iranian independence and self-representative government. He had read [E.G.] Browne's dramatic and sympathetic account of the Constitutional Revolution and arrived in Tehran in May 1911 suffused with romantic visions of Iran's yearnings for freedom.

Shuster's politics did not recommend him kindly to the British and Russian legations. Early on he rankled the British and Russians with his refusal to play by their rules. In an act of great symbolic importance to Iran's Parliament, he shunned the two embassies, refusing to pay a courtesy call on either ambassador. . . . As Shuster wrote in his moving memoir, *The Strangling of Persia*, "The Iranian people were surprised to see a farangi (foreigner) who does not take orders from foreign legations." He came to the same conclusions that Baskerville had before him: Iran's kings and reactionary clerics bristled at any major reforms of the political system. As long as imperial Britain and Russia sided with the "reactionary agents hostile to any improvement", Iran would remain mired in its backward state.

—Afshin Molavi, *Persian Pilgrimages: Journeys across Iran* (2002)

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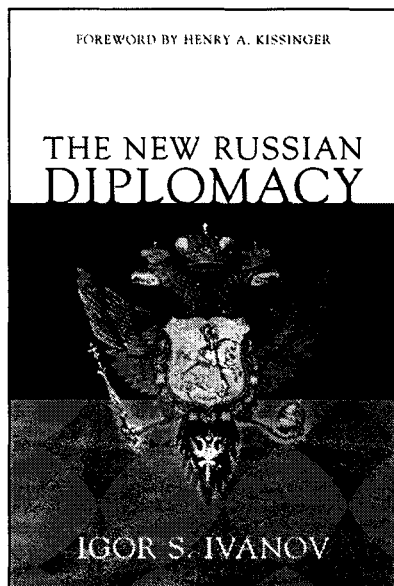
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